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WALKS IN EPPING FOREST

By PERCY LINDLEY

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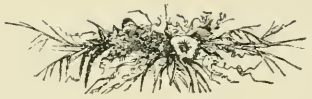

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The referring point for the Greenwich Observatory on the summit is said to be the highest point in Essex.

From this point the traditional seven counties are to be discerned, and Chingford humourists say, that "if a man takes a walk up there every morning he will never die." Be this as it may, there cannot be any doubt that the view from the brow of the hill is a sight worth seeing. The operations upon this Estate are under the direction of Mr. GEO. NEWMAN, of Deptford and Chingford, and we can promise the visitors to this charming locality the greatest attention and courtesy from him or his representatives.

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Forest Lo
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CHURCH ROAD
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THE GREEN RIDE, NEAR LITTING.

WALKS

IN

EPPING FOREST.

EDITED BY PERCY LINDLEY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

1885.

LONDON: 123–125, FLEET STREET, E.C.; and at all Booksellers' and Bookstalls.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE average Londoner feels no pride in the fact that he can lose himself with great facility within his own Forest, half an hour from the Bank of England. He is not aware that those facilities exist. In the Metropolitan Police area there is no part we know so little about, except, perhaps, London itself, as the wooded Essex border district, called Epping Forest.

On one of the few sunless mornings last November, the writer started from Chingford Hotel on a forest walk. By a forest walk was understood avoiding paths and roads, as a ship would shoals and rocks. The object was the Ancient Earthworks, known as Loughton Camp. He had tried twice before with a trusting friend to strike it, and failed. He failed again. Groping through the dead brake and tangled brambles of a deep thicket he came, at the rushy bottom, on a small dog. The small dog, from the abject droop of tail and nose, was painfully lost. Presently a faltering whistle came down from the facing wood, and the writer followed the bounding terrier to its master for guidance. The master himself was lost. That is to say, standing on the thicket edge by a straight road, he did not know, living at Woodford, whether his way home lay up the road or down, or in some other direction.

A month later two companions, tarrying too late at Epping, beguiled into seeing its lonely church, far away from the town among high pastures, struck across country at dusk in the one snow-storm of the year, and, aided by a clever map and the light of a stray fusee, succeeded in describing a fairly accurate

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circle—a feat which brought them back into Epping town when they should have been miles to the south—at Chingford.

Later, an astute editor, who has indicated to travellers the way they should go in many lands, confounded Chigwell with Chingford, and earned the pitiless congratulations of his anxious friends and the undying contempt of the Chingford *chef* at a spoiled dinner in consequence.

Such trifles and the like during last autumn, winter, and spring, added piquancy to much innocent rambling. But they taught those who met in this quasi club fashion, among other things—that some very beautiful forest ground lies at London's door, although those who step out to enjoy it are mostly local holiday-makers, and driving-folk keeping to certain spots—that while the forest is not all wood, it is the centre of many bracing rustic walks on its borders, though one can walk in woods all day if one knows the way—that to enjoy the forest in its pleasant morning lights and life, a day or two should be passed in it, choosing the middle of the week for absolute repose and quiet, and Chingford for a centre—that, finally, some handy forest pocket-book for ready reference and guidance was sadly wanted in these exhilarating ramblings.

With the thought of helping others in their rambles these pages have been put together. Assumption of superior knowledge by the compilers would be unbecoming, for it would probably be found out. Will the reader assist the Editor by suggestions for improving the next edition and making it more useful?

125, Fleet Street, E.C.

"HALF AN HOUR FROM THE BANK OF ENGLAND."

EPPING FOREST.

I.—IN HISTORIC TIMES.

AN ECCENTRIC BEECH.

THE flat marshy lands, wooded hills, and long sweeping well-watered hollows of calf-breeding Essex, have, in Epping Forest, some six thousand acres, more or less, that are still very like what all England once was. In its varied and verdant solitudes the appreciative student of English history has unchanged actual scenes associated with some of that history's most stirring story, for these green hills and dales are the undisturbed fragment of that "vast continuity of shade" which once covered nearly a million acres, and was the Great Forest of Essex.

Then leafy glades and thorny thickets, wild heaths, hills and dales, pathless moors and morasses, stretched over the entire county. Mile after mile to Colchester, and beyond it down to the sea; along the borders of Hertfordshire as far as Cambridgeshire. Blended in one direction with the great forest of Middlesex, it extended in another to where the Thames spread out its broad glare of grey and blue over the low lands, more like some still inland lake than the swift sweeping river of to-day.

Essex, then, was the land of the Cassii, the most warlike and powerful of all the Celtic tribes of Britain, the terror of their neighbours. Here they had their fortified towns or camps, circular huts with tall conical roofs of thatch or reeds, standing on the hill-tops amongst the trees, shut in with protecting pallisades, ditches, and earthworks. And here, in Epping, some of the forms and

boundaries of such camps are still marked by surviving relics (page 61). In such woods and thickets as we can wander through to-day they lived and loved, married and multiplied like wolves in their lairs. Sentinelled by sharp-eyed, sharp-eared ferocious dogs, ever in expectation of merciless foes, here they passed their hours of quiet, and slept with weapons ready by their sides. And here, boastful and defiant, the bards at their wild and noisy feastings, sang the glories of slaughter and rapine. Here they sallied forth to gather roots and wild fruits, or revel in the swift pleasures of the chase. Here they fought so desperately against that Belgic tribe of invaders, the fierce Trinobantes, and here they mourned the frequent loss of valiant chiefs, whose violent deaths were to perpetuate indefinitely the dark horrors of tireless hatred and revenge. And here, where ancient oaks are thickest on the hill-tops, they worshipped, awed into silence by superstitious terrors, or marched in stately procession as they sang hymns in honour of unknown gods, of which hymns the distorted remnants are still heard in the seemingly unmeaning choruses of our comic songs.

Here we see what conquering legions saw, when, opposed by the Cassii as deadly foes, and welcomed by the Trinobantes as powerful allies, Roman troops passed in warlike state and triumph through the Great Forest, to give, and receive, some fearful lessons. To teach the Celts that lesson which they have always found the hardest to learn : that of unity in the face of danger. To learn how impossible it was to rule in peace or definitely conquer a people irrationally proud and unreasoning in all their more passionate impulses, prone to forget benefits and to nurse wrongs, real and imaginary—a people defiant of control, who never either recognised or admitted defeat.

It was the savage blood-feuds of contending clans, tribes, and families, handed down from Celtic grandsires to fathers, and from fathers to sons, that first placed this nation—if we may so call that which had yet to become a nation—at the invader's foot. The Trinobantes were the fathers of those who welcomed the Saxons to fight their battles, and quarrelled with and fought against them when they were victorious. They were the kindred of those Irish Celts, who, in succeeding centuries, invited the invading Danes and Normans as allies against their countrymen, and quarrelled with them, as they did afterwards with their other foreign allies, the Spaniards and the French.

Subjection, cruelly and persistently enforced by Roman masters, welded into some semblance of unity the turbulent Britons at last, but it required Roman, Saxon, and Danish conquerors, with centuries of slavery and slaughter, to accomplish the task in reality. On the departure of the Romans these seemingly civilized Britons at once re-commenced their old quarrels and fightings. Slaughter and destruction again ran riot in these ancient woods. The Roman cities were neglected and abandoned for the old woodland encampments. Roman laws ceased to restrain when Roman swords ceased to enforce them. The ancient Briton was once more master in the land he rendered powerless and wretched. The victorious were content, the defeated petitioned the Romans for protection. They could not return, so the Saxons were invited and came. They con-

quered and made peace, but they, too, found it impossible to live in amity with the Celt, and, being a race more stern and fiercer than the Romans, they slaughtered and enslaved their quarrelsome allies, drove them up and out into the more sterile, savage districts of Wales and Cornwall, across the English Channel into Brittany, or the Irish Channel into the land of their nearest kindred, where still they quarrelled and fought amongst themselves.

The Saxons, a race as mighty in the chase as in war, revelled in the green and golden wildernesses of these Essex woods. Fancy listens to their horns, their wild shouts, the barking of their dogs, and the gallop of their steeds as they sweep by in pursuit of deer or boar. We see their huge barn-like halls rising in the green twilight of these leafy depths, surrounded by the huts and cottages of sturdy dependents, freemen, and born thralls. They were genuine Saxon, being neither Jutes nor Angles, and we can glean what they thought of the Briton in reading one of their saintly legends—still preserved in the British Museum—written soon after they were Christianized. The saint says he understood the hideous doings, and even the language of devils, when he descended into Hades, because he had formerly been a prisoner amongst the Celtic Britons! At Havering-atte-Bower, here in the Epping wilds, was held the Court of the Saint-King, Norman-loving, Norman-speaking, Norman-bred Edward the Confessor. Although more fitted for a monk than a monarch, he loved the chase, and pursued it merrily in the Essex woods. Harold, his successor, lord of many a forest acre in Epping and Essex, loved the chase no less, and here enjoyed it. Discord and disunion again invited invasion. The Britons and Saxons, native Danes and foreign Danes, fell to loggerheads, and William, surnamed the Conqueror, seeing his opportunity, swiftly seized it. Harold, slain at Hastings, was buried at Waltham Abbey. The unhappy Saxons, hated by the vengeful Briton and vengefully hating the Normans, made the thickets their hiding-places and the woods their castles, thence sallying forth in secrecy and darkness to make night horrible with slaughter. Then these woods saw a woeful hunting—men hunted to the death as beasts had been; saw panting wretches flying as the deer fled, with horns and hounds in full pursuit; saw them at bay in the thickets, fighting for their lives as fiercely as tusked boar could fight, and as vainly.

With all due form and solemnity the Norman Conqueror, who loved the chase and protected the tall deer as if they had been of his own royal blood, granted to "William the Bishop" and "Godfrey the Portreeve" by charter those memorable privileges to which we, in some way or another, owe all that remains of Epping Forest; for, odd as it may seem, there is no land, however wild its condition, over which anybody has legal right to roam at will. Every acre of it, the lawyers say, must belong to somebody, who alone can give that right. Hence, when a "Liberal" Government would fain have taken from us this no-man's land, our stout friends the Corporation of the City of London, as representing the aforesaid William and Godfrey, put in a claim to it, supported that claim in a fierce hot fight, and as the result legally made over these acres of ancient woodland to the people, to be their own for ever.

The old monks of Waltham had their chase, and their Abbot had many forest privileges. So had the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, and, as already said, the City Corporation. During the reigns of Henry I. and Stephen, to reward friends and replenish the impoverished royal treasury, considerable tracts of the forest became private property. Richard I., to provide funds for his Holy War, followed their example. But still the right of the London citizens was acknowledged, if not respected. King John threw down the fences that protected the corn, and cultivated lands from the wild deer, but he disafforested all that part of the forest which lay to the north of the highway from Stortford to Colchester. Henry III. confirmed the ancient hunting privileges of the city, but confined it within a circuit of the nearest twenty miles; and Edward I., following Henry and Stephen in selling the forest land and the city rights, was checked by the stern threat of armed rebellion. Edward IV. confirmed the charter of King John, and the forest was yet further reduced by a perambulation made in the year 1640, when the boundaries settled included the whole of eleven and parts of ten parishes. In his days we find London's chief citizens were famous followers of the deer. There exists an account of how Edward IV. himself hunted with the citizens in Waltham Forest, and how they all, King, courtiers, and citizens, had a merry feast under the green boughs, and how the monarch sent as presents to the Lady Mayoress, her sisters, and the aldermen's wives, two harts and six bucks slain that day, with a tun of wine, wherewith the Corporation afterwards held a grand feast in the Drapers' Hall. There is an old forest tradition which says Henry VIII. was hunting in Epping Forest at the very time when Anne Boleyn was being killed on the scaffold. A gun conveyed the signal that all was over, on hearing which the British Bluebeard cried, "The business is done. Uncouple the dogs, and let us follow the sport."

By the close of the sixteenth century, however, civic huntings here in the forest became fewer, and as time progressed yet fewer. But the custom lingered, for Strype records how as late as in the reign of our first George the chief citizens were found "riding on horseback and hunting with my Lord Mayor's hounds when the common hunt goes out," which was, however, little more than a formal show for the preservation of ancient rights. This was the old Easter hunt, of which a satirical ballad called "London Customs" thus sang:

"Next once a year into Essex a-hunting they go,
To see 'em pass along, O, 'tis a most pretty show!
Thro' Cheapside and Fenchurch Street, and so to Aldgate pump,
Each man with's spurs in 's horse's sides, and his back-sword cross his rump."

The song goes on to tell how the Lord Mayor took a staff to "beat the bushes," "a work he ne'er had done before," when—

"A creature bounceth from a bush, which made them all to laugh;
My lord he cried, 'A hare! a hare!' but it proved an Essex calf.

"And when they had done their sport, they came to London, where they dwell,
Their faces all so torn and scratched, their wives scarce knew them well;
For 'twas a very great mercy so many 'scaped alive,
For of twenty saddles carried out they brought again but five."

A consummation to be best understood by those who have wandered in the wilder and more rugged portions of Epping Forest, even as it is.

QUEEN ELIZABETH IN EPPING FOREST.—*From the Staircase Window, Forest Hotel.*

For some years the Epping Hunt was discontinued, but some idle East-enders long carried it out after their fashion. A deer was carted about from one forest tavern to another, amidst a crowd of noisy, half-drunken London roughs, the keepers being treated with drink and food until they could neither eat nor drink any more, after which the deer was let loose, and riotously pursued until lost to sight or run down. Most readers will recall Hood's verses, describing how the hunters came to the forest, how—

> "Some pushed along with four-in-hand,
> Whilst others drove at random,
> In curricle, dog-cart, whisky, one-
> Horse chaise or tandem,"

to the Eagle at Snaresbrook and thence to the Bald-face Stag. The *Illustrated London News*, describing the scene in one of its early numbers, speaks of one "Thomas Rounding, Esqr.," as "huntsman in ordinary and also extraordinary of the day;" adding, "Here Tom was to be seen in all his glory. His hunting-cap and coat, his buckskin breeches and top-boots, mounted on a horse that had borne him through the toils of many a busy day. He was—for, alas! he has been gathered to his fathers and grandfathers for some time—a famous fellow in his day. His acquaintance with the forest was most intimate—

> "'He knew each lane, and every alley green,
> Dingle and bushy dell of these wild woods,'

And he had need of all his knowledge on Easter Monday to keep his sylvans in order, prevent his hounds from being crushed to mincemeat by the feet of the horses and the wheels of the carriages, and rescue the deer from ultimate destruction, or premature capture, from the entanglement of actual lanes of men, women, and children, quadrupeds, bipeds, carts, coaches, etc."

But we are emerging from ancient times, when savage warfare, feudal warfare, and civil warfare raged so often in the forest wilds of Essex—from the time when Epping was a famous place for the city archers and the holiday-making citizens, and good Queen Bess first set up her hunting-lodge, where still it may be seen, and have come down to times less remote from our own.

Century after century, year by year, the Forest had been growing small by degrees and not beautifully less. In 1777, 12,000 acres of Forest land remained unenclosed. In 1788 Earl Waldegrave, under an Act of Parliament, appropriated 670 acres. In 1793, the Forest area had decreased to 9,000 acres; in 1854, to 7,000. In 1871 it had dwindled down to 3,400 acres. Then the Corporation stepped in and stopped further appropriation. By dint of hard fighting over 2,000 acres of stolen Forest land were recovered, and the Forest, as handed over to the people, is little short of 9 square miles in extent.

On the 25th May, 1871, the following resolution was proposed in the Court of Common Council by Mr. John T. Bedford: "That a committee be appointed to seek a conference with her Majesty's Ministers to ascertain on what terms and conditions the Corporation can secure to the people, for purposes of public health and recreation, those parts of Epping Forest which have not been enclosed with the assent of the Crown or by legal authority." The resolution was passed. It was followed by eleven years' agitation and litigation. In July, 1882, the arbitrator, under the Epping Forest Act, signed the award and the official map, which determined for all time the forest boundaries. Epping Forest was saved, at a cost of over a quarter of a million sterling.

II.—IN PRE-HISTORIC TIMES.

Geology of the Forest.

Every tract of country presents us with a number of interesting questions for solution. On the one hand, we may seek to learn all we can about its antiquities, the history of the churches, the original settlers who gave names to the parishes, and how these came to be divided as they are; and our inquiries soon show us that the subject is but a fragment in the history and geography of the country. On the other hand, we may devote ourselves to the natural history. We may catalogue the animals and plants—but how came they there? We may separate those imported by man from those which nature has introduced; and here again we have interesting questions to solve. We may trace out the courses of the streams, and ramble over the hills, and still more problems come before us: for when did the rivers commence to run, and how long have the hills maintained their present positions? While, if we investigate the various soils and subsoils, the brick-clays, gravels, or building-stones, which help to form the solid substance of our land, we are again beset with countless questions about their age and origin, as well as about the history of those curious relics of former life called fossils, which are found here and there in most of the subsoils or "strata."

With all these natural history questions geology is more or less concerned: for although as a science it deals firstly with the nature of the rocks or earths which constitute the ground beneath us, its main object is to decipher from them, and from the organic remains which they contain, a history of the various changes through which the earth's surface has passed. And one of the most interesting conclusions is that the present is but the continuation of the past—the story of which, while made up of many and varied changes in scene and life, is yet unbroken by any universal break or catastrophe.

The student who would commence his geological observations in Epping Forest may at first find little to attract his attention or arouse enthusiasm in the subject; for the district itself does not bear favourable comparison with many other parts of England as a field for the study of rocks or the collection of fossils. Nevertheless, the strata exposed at its surface furnish evidence of great physical changes, and lead us to contemplate scenes at one time almost tropical, at another arctic in severity.

The Forest Area.

With these preliminary remarks we may at once start for the Forest, which, as might be expected, comprises several isolated tracts of woodland. We may, however, roughly confine our remarks to the district included by the Ordnance Map of 1844, which lies as far south as Forest Gate, near Stratford, and stretches northwards, about ten miles, to the little town of Epping. This area

is bounded on the west by the Lea Valley, and on the east for some distance by the valley of the Roding; and it varies in breadth from three to five miles. Two hundred years ago the whole of it was forest-land. Looked at in a broad way, it is an undulating tract of ground, the central portions of which rise to the highest elevations as at Highbeach and Jack's Hill. The subsoil over the greater part of this area is clay, the monotony of which is broken here and there by coverings of gravel and sand. On such a foundation most of our great forests have grown—for the oak in particular loves a clay soil, and so does the hornbeam; while the superficial strata of gravel and sand, suitable enough for the pine and the holly, are rarely too thick to prove detrimental to those trees, which like to draw sustenance from the heavier subsoils. The marshes bordering the rivers and the pools held up by the clay furnish favourable spots for trees like the willow, the poplar, and alder, which flourish where moisture prevails.

OAK AND POPLARS BY THE FOREST POOL, CHINGFORD.

LONDON CLAY.

The clay about which we have spoken is known to geologists as the London clay, and it forms the foundation of the entire area, with the exception of a limited tract near Leyton. Here, beneath the gravel, traces of

shelly clay belonging to the Woolwich and Reading series have lately been identified. Where seen at the surface the London clay is generally a brown and somewhat tenacious clay, but deeper down it is usually blue or bluish-grey—the brown colour being due to the weathering, or in other words, to the peroxidating of the iron ore which it contains. Nodules of clayey limestone, called "septaria," are frequently met with in the London clay, and these owe their name to the cracks or *septa* in the stone, which are filled with calc-spar. The upper part of the London clay is often sandy or loamy, for it passes by alternations of sand and clay into the Bagshot beds above it. These upper beds of the London clay appear in the brickyard west of Theydon Bois Green, on Epping Plain, and above the railway station at Epping.

The clay itself may be best seen in the brickyards, where it is used for making bricks and tiles, as at Buckhurst Hill, Loughton, and other places; and there is an old brickyard at Chingford Fairmead.

No single or isolated area, like that we are now considering, could be expected to furnish a full or even connected history of the changes which the area has undergone. We must, therefore, while paying especial attention to the chief local facts to be observed, draw our general conclusions respecting them from what is known of the same strata over a more extended area.

FOSSILS OF LONDON CLAY.

Then we find that the fossils of the London clay are much more numerous than a chance visit to a brickyard would lead us to imagine. Extensive operations like those carried on in making the railway tunnels in the north of London, in excavating the road at Highgate Archway, or the foundering cliffs of Sheppey, have yielded many of the fossil treasures of this period. Among the mollusca, the *Nautilus*, *Voluta*, and *Cyprœa* are conspicuous; and a boring-shell or "ship-worm" called *Teredina* is also found, together with fragments of the wood it has pierced. More striking are the remains of vertebrate animals: among fishes there were several kinds of sharks; the reptiles include a number of turtles and a large serpent; the birds form a remarkable group, containing forms allied to the ostrich and the vulture, and one web-footed species which had jaws provided with bony teeth; while among the mammals were forms resembling the hyrax and tapir. Plants allied to the euphorbias, mimosæ, and acaciæ have been found; and also many fruits of palms, for which Sheppey is noted, although unfortunately the specimens are much impregnated with iron-pyrites.

The fossils of the London clay indicate that the climate during its formation was almost tropical; while the deposit itself must have been laid down slowly and quietly near the mouth of some large river.

THE BAGSHOT BEDS.

The deposits next in age to the London clay are known as the Bagshot Beds, from their great development on Bagshot Heath, in Surrey. Only the lower portion of these beds is to be found in our district, and this comprises about ten feet of buff and light-brown sand with seams of pipe-clay, forming a portion of the high ground at Highbeach. Here, however, the Bagshot Beds are partly obscured by a covering of pebble-gravel of much

later age; but they may be seen in pits north-west of the King's Oak Inn. In other parts of Essex they form heathy grounds, for cultivation would not be profitable. A sandy soil on clay is, however, far preferable to a clayey soil on sand; for, as the Essex farmers sometimes say:

> "When the clay doth feed the sand,
> Then 'tis well for England;
> But when the sand doth feed the clay,
> Then for England lack-a-day."

In this district no fossils have been recorded from the Lower Bagshot Beds, but in equivalent strata in the Isle of Wight many plants of sub-tropical character have been found: they include the *aralia*, large fig-trees and fig-sycamores. The beds were deposited in a shallower sea than the London clay, and the climate was probably cooler.

The London clay and Bagshot Beds were spread over the entire area of Essex and Middlesex, besides over portions of the area of other counties; and afterwards the tract was for an extended period raised above water. Then the various surface agents of destruction, in the shape of rain and rivers, began to erode channels and to wear away the strata, so that the Bagshot Beds near London are now represented only by the isolated patches to be seen at Harrow, Hampstead Heath, Highbeach, and other places—which are, in truth, remnants of a great sheet of these sands. The agents of destruction did not, however, do all the work during this interval, but some of the main features of our country were then marked out.

GLACIAL DEPOSITS.

The next deposits we have to consider are the patches of gravel which mark the incoming of the glacial period, or "Great Ice Age," as it is sometimes called. On referring to the Geological Survey Map, we find certain areas of gravel (coloured light pink) at Woodford, Buckhurst Hill, and Loughton; and other areas (coloured darker pink) at Highbeach, Jack's Hill, and to the east of Epping. The latter, as a rule, are composed chiefly of pebbles of flint and quartz; while the former contain, in addition, many subangular or partially rolled flints, and sometimes pebbles of quartzite, granite, and igneous rocks, besides fossils such as *gryphæa* or *belemnites* derived from older formations.

The pebble-gravels, as they are called, usually cap the higher grounds, and are seldom more than three or four feet in thickness. They are no doubt in great measure derived either from beds of flint pebbles, which occur in strata beneath the London clay (Woolwich and Reading Beds), and crop out at the surface further north; or they may be in part derived from beds of flint-pebbles that sometimes occur in the Lower Bagshot Beds. It is, indeed, not always possible to distinguish between these gravels and those of a less pebbly nature; and often, as is the case with patches of gravel on Hampstead Heath, and on Shooter's Hill, in Kent, their precise age is an open question.

Most of the gravels that occur to the north and east of Epping are found, however, to pass under the Boulder clay, which is distinctly a glacial deposit; and hence these gravels, which appear to be intimately associated

with it, are regarded as belonging to the glacial period.

The subangular gravels are well shown in pits on Buckhurst Hill, and they may be seen also to the west of Woodford, and to the south-east of Loughton.

THE BOULDER CLAY.

The Boulder clay is in general a tough, unstratified clay or marl, containing many rounded pieces of chalk. Many blocks or fragments of flint likewise occur, as well as rocks of various kinds and ages, some of which are grooved or scratched by ice-action. Fossils, too, derived from the chalk, oolites, and lias, are now and then met with.

Patches of this Boulder clay occur at Theydon Bois and Epping town, where in irregular thickness and mode of occurrence they form outliers of a great sheet of Boulder clay, extending northwards to Dunmow, beyond which other masses spread over a considerable part of the Eastern Counties. Weathering often into a brown loamy or clayey soil, the chalk having been dissolved out by atmospheric agents, it is sometimes difficult at first to distinguish the Boulder clay from the London clay.

The Boulder clay is a relic of a period when great glaciers extended over much of Scotland and the North of England, uniting so as to form what are termed ice-sheets; and these pushing their way over the oolitic hills and vales and the chalk wolds of Lincolnshire and the Midland Counties, ground off much material from the strata, and spread the débris far and wide over the Eastern Counties. And the grooving of the boulders is attributed to stones imbedded in the ice either acting on others, or being themselves striated as the ice moved on.

In former days the Boulder clay was much used for "claying" or "marling" the ground for agricultural purposes. Hence there are many old pits in the clay which are now, however, little else than ponds. The deposit was opened up in the brickyard north of Epping town.

The southern portions of Epping Forest at Wanstead, and the parishes of Walthamstow, Leyton, and Ilford, are chiefly based upon gravel and brick-earth, which belong to a newer period than the Boulder clay to which we have just referred. Glaciers may still have lingered in North Britain, but the climate had ameliorated; at the same time England was united to the Continent, for the Straits of Dover had not yet been formed.

ORGANIC REMAINS.

And now not only many of the larger mammalia made their appearance, but man also sought a home on our territory. The deposits in which these remains are found, lie in what is called the Thames Valley; they extend eastwards to Romford, and fringe the western side of the Lea Valley, spreading out over much of London and the country to the south and west of it. The brickyards near Great Ilford are most famous in the neighbourhood for organic remains; but the deposits may be seen in gravel-pits or brickyards in the southern portions of the Forest, as before mentioned.

In the area now under consideration, the relics of man, in the shape of rudely chipped (or palæolithic) flint implements, have been found by Mr. Worthington G. Smith, at Walthamstow, Leyton, Leytonstone, Wanstead, Forest Gate, and Stratford; and no doubt the inhabitants of the old Lea Valley fashioned their weapons and tools from the flint stones which the river accumulated along its course.

The mammalian remains, of which a fine collection was made by the late Sir Antonio Brady at Maryland Point, near Stratford, include the mammoth and one other species of elephant, three species of rhinoceros, the hippopotamus, Irish elk, bison, urus, musk-sheep, brown bear, grisly bear, wolf, and other animals. To this period, indeed, we must assign the introduction of many of the forms of life which constitute our present fauna and flora; for while the largest of these mammalia did not live on to historic times, many of them lingered on to a comparatively recent period.

Many land and freshwater shells are found in the Thames Valley brickearths, the most noteworthy of which, the *Corbicula* (or *Cyrena*) *fluminalis*, is now only known to be living in the Nile. These organic remains indicate that the Thames Valley deposits were essentially freshwater accumulations of the river. When we contemplate the broad expanse occupied by these deposits we need not, however, conclude that the river, except in seasons of flood, spread over the entire area. Rivers, as is well known, run in a circuitous route, and erode the hills that border them, now on one side of the valley, and then on the other.

ALLUVIUM.

After the deposition of the Thames Valley gravels and brickearth some upheaval of the area took place, and the River Thames since then has occupied a more restricted area. This area is marked out by the levels or marshes which border it, and which are spoken of in geological language as alluvium. These are the most recent deposits of the area, and may be said to be still in process of formation, although they date back to pre-historic times. The earliest human records of this period are the polished (Neolithic) stone celts, of which examples have been found at Temple Mills, near Stratford.

Some interesting sections of the alluvium near Walthamstow were exposed in 1868-9, during excavations made for the filter-beds and reservoirs of the East London Waterworks Company. Notes of them were made at the time by Dr. Henry Woodward, F.R.S., who found numerous skulls and portions of skeletons of both historic and pre-historic Britons, as well as implements of stone, bone, bronze, and iron. Besides a long list of land and freshwater shells of living species, many bones of mammalia, and a few of birds and fishes, were obtained. The mammalia included the wolf, fox, horse, wild boar, red deer, roebuck, reindeer, elk, urus, and Celtic short-horned ox.

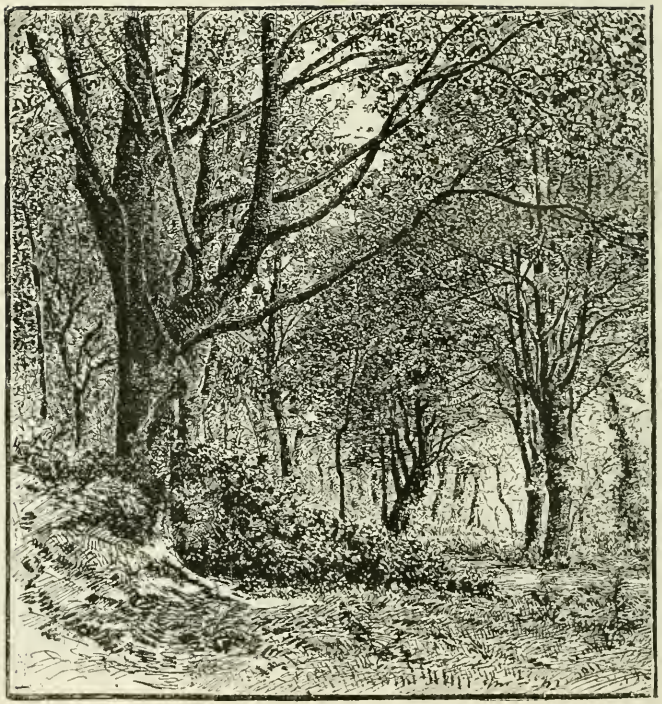
The occurrence of the beaver is particularly interesting, and it was found in considerable numbers. As Dr. Woodward remarks, the work and the enjoyment of the beaver is to construct dams, forming large, deep, and clear pools of water, with a series of small waterfalls at intervals.

When a great flood comes down the river these beaver-dams would lead to a considerable inundation of the forest. Many of the trees could not withstand this excessive damp; and hence large tracts would be converted into peaty or marshy land. In this way Dr. Woodward thinks some of our broad alluvial tracts may have been formed.

MODERN ASPECT OF THE LAND.

Thus geology leads us on to consider the modern aspect of the land, and the influence exerted by man. The draining of marshy tracts, the cultivation of the land, and the cutting down of our forests have led to the destruction of many forms of animal life. The brown bear was exterminated in Saxon times; the reindeer lived on at Caithness until 1159; and the beaver existed in Wales till about the year 1200. In 1154, however, there were wolves, wild boars, stags, and wild bulls in Epping Forest. The wolf lived on in England till 1306, and in Scotland until 1680, dying out only about 200 years ago. The wild boar became extinct soon after 1620. The red deer still haunts the moors of North Devon and West Somerset; but the wild bull exists only in a modified form in certain parks of our landed proprietors.

The trees introduced by nature include the oak, ash, willow, poplar, alder, birch,



A BANK OF BEECH BY FAIRMEAD.

beech, hornbeam, pine, holly, and yew, with the underwood of hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn, elder, brambles, and briars.

The Romans, it is thought, introduced the elm, as well as the cherry and some other fruit-trees. Of later introductions, the more conspicuous are the common lime, the horse-chestnut, the acacia, the plane, spruce fir, larch, cedar, Lombardy poplar, mulberry, and laburnum.

WATER SUPPLY.

The geological structure of a country largely influenced the earlier settlements, for the question of a ready water-supply, so dependent on the nature of the strata, was then, as now, a most important one. Prof. Prestwich has pointed out how the growth of London in early times corresponded with the boundaries of the Thames Valley gravels, while the outlying villages were located on isolated patches or strips of similar subsoil. In this way a number of important villages grew up on the western gravelly side of the Lea Valley, while on its eastern and more clayey side the villages are few and far between in comparison.

The growth of our population, however (not to mention other causes) creates a need for larger supplies of water than can be obtained by shallow wells, sunk through the superficial gravel to the London clay beneath. And the many deep wells that have in late years been made, furnish us with a knowledge of the underground geology which has proved of very great interest.

UNDERGROUND GEOLOGY.

Thus at Loughton a deep well, made for the Great Eastern Railway, was carried to a depth of 1,096 feet. The strata passed through were: the London clay, 167 feet; Woolwich and Reading Beds (mottled clays, sands, and pebble-beds), 36 feet; Thanet Beds (chiefly sand), 40 feet; chalk, about 651 feet; upper green-sand, about 30 feet, and Gault (clay), 172 feet. Lower green-sand was probably touched at the bottom, and a good supply of water was obtained.

Several other deep wells have been made in the area; thus at Epping the chalk was reached at a depth of 404 feet; at Waltham Abbey, at 160 feet; and at Walthamstow Marsh, at 152 feet. But the chief interest of the deep borings centres round the question of much older rocks being met with, and among these possibly coal-measures being found at a workable depth in the Eastern Counties. And in support of this we may mention that rocks *older* than the coal-measures have been already proved at no great distance from our area. Thus at Ware, Wenlock Shales (Silurian) were met with at a depth of 796½ feet beneath lower green-sand (?): and at Turnford, near Cheshunt, purple shales of Devonian age were proved, beneath the Gault, at a depth of 980 feet. The results of these and other borings may naturally raise some hopes that our coal-supply may in the course of time be supplemented, if necessary, from underground sources in the east of England. To some eyes, perhaps, the transition from heathland and forests to chimneys and furnaces is not a change for the better. The very name of the Black Country of South Stafford-

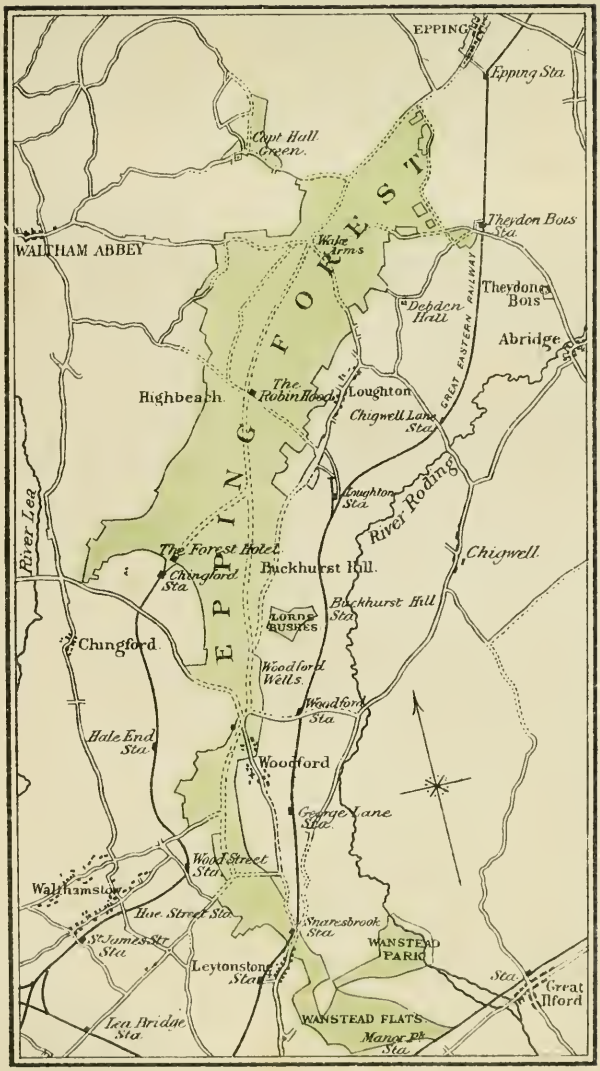
shire denotes the absence of all that would make the country pleasant to most of us—who have no shares in the collieries of that district.

The student, however, who seeks to know something of the geology of Epping Forest need not distress himself with such pictures. Far pleasanter is it to recall in imagination some of the varied scenes and climes of the past, and to feel that the present is but a link in the series of changes which have gone on from "time immemorial" and a great deal longer, and which may be continued in the future — how long no one can divine.

HORACE B. WOODWARD, F.G.S.,
of the Geological Survey of England.

[Those who desire further information on the geology, should consult Mr. Whitaker's "Guide to the Geology of London and the Neighbourhood," fourth edition, 1884; and his "Geology of the London Basin," 1872 (published by the Geological Survey); also the "Transactions of the Essex Field Club."]

FOREST POND, ON THE EPPING ROAD.


EPPING
Epping Sta.
Copt Hall Green.
EPPING FOREST
WALTHAM ABBEY
Wake Arms
Theydon Bois Sta.
Theydon Bois
Debden Hall
Abridge
GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY
Highbeach
The Robin Hoods
Loughton
Chigwell Lane Sta.
Loughton Sta.
River Roding
River Lea
The Forest Hotel
Chingford Sta.
Buckhurst Hill.
Chigwell.
Buckhurst Hill Sta.
LORDS BUSHES
Chingford
Woodford Wells.
Woodford Sta.
Hale End Sta.
Woodford
George Lane Sta.
Wood Street Sta.
Walthamstow
Hoe Street Sta.
Snaresbrook Sta.
St James's Str. Sta.
WANSTEAD PARK
Leytonstone Sta.
Sta.
Great Ilford
Lea Bridge Sta.
WANSTEAD FLATS
Manor Pk. Sta.

III.—THE FOREST AS IT IS.

Dull, Useful, Information.

Railway Service.—Epping Forest is accessible by rail from every part of London. It is served by quick services of trains from Liverpool Street, Fenchurch Street, and St. Pancras; and through communication now exists between the Great Eastern Railway, the Midland, the Metropolitan, the North London, and North Western, the East London, and the Tilbury and Southend Companies. A subway connects the Bishopsgate station of the Metropolitan with Liverpool Street. Omnibuses run from all parts of the West End and the suburbs to Liverpool Street.

Besides a direct branch line to Chingford, the Great Eastern system serves both sides of the Forest; on the east the Ongar branch, with stations at Leyton, Woodford, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton, Chigwell Lane, Theydon Bois, and Epping; on the west, the Cambridge line, with neighbouring stations at Ponder's End and Waltham Cross, both within easy walking distance.

Fares.—Throughout the season excursion tickets are issued from Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street by all trains to Chingford, Woodford, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton, available to return by any of these stations. The return fares are: 1st class, 2s.; 2nd class, 1s. 4d.; 3rd. class, 1s.

By Road.—From the west and west-central districts of London, a pleasant road is along Portland Place, Regent's Park, Camden Road, Seven Sisters' Road, Tottenham High Road, crossing the Lea at the ferry boat, past Chingford Old Church to Chingford Green, and by the railway station to the hotel. The latter portion of this drive of course also applies to the north and north-western districts of London. Distances and other particulars of access by road to the Forest will be found under the head "Cycling" (p. 33).

Forest Walks (see p. 46).—The walks described have been arranged to avoid roads and the frequented paths as much as possible. A compass as well as map will be found of use in many parts if the walks are followed as given. No written directions alone can be sufficient.

Visitors wanting the Forest "to themselves," should select Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during the summer months. In the beautiful spring or autumn time there is always seclusion. In winter the keepers and the local residents are almost its only frequenters. It is strange, for there is nothing austere or repellent in this winter aspect. Parts of the Forest are never bare of leaves. The turf is always green, much of the undergrowth retains a russet dress, and the abounding holly gleams in every thicket. The oak and hornbeam woods on the protected valley slopes never shed their leaves. The foliage dies without falling from the trees. Between *Earl's Path* and the *Monk Woods* (p. 61), the deep slopes of Debden Slade fall and rise a brown winter wood, the foliage dry and crisp, rustling on the boughs.

The pedestrian "getting up" the topography of the Forest will frequently come across "The Green Ride."

The term must be understood to apply to the broad grassy slopes cleared of their timber and undergrowth, and not to any one particular "ride." There are upwards of a dozen "Green Rides" now, cleared for the most part through, and opening up without spoiling, the thickest parts. The public is mainly indebted for these "rides" to the verderers and Major Mackenzie, the Forest Superintendent. Till they were made it was practically impossible for the stranger to find his way about, except by following the roads. Even now some simple, rustic system of direction is required, by arrow or other marks on trunks and stumps, such as exists throughout the German forests, to mark the paths and indicate the routes.

The Forest is seen at its best at early morning or evening. No one who has not slept within earshot, or taken morning Forest rambles, can imagine how every thicket is full of the songs of birds; or who has not strolled at quiet sundown through the glades towards Epping, how many are its deer, to say nothing of "such small deer" as hares and rabbits, pheasants and partridges, and other living things. The early or nocturnal rambler cautiously and quietly moving in search of these sounds and sights may feel the keen eye of a velveteen-coated, high-booted keeper—that dread of poachers—watching him with lively interest. But he will find the owner of the eye upon acquaintance to have a fund of knowledge of Forest ways and life, not less interesting or instructive because it is imparted in homely talk, or because things are called by their English names. In his longer rambles the pedestrian feels a fine sense of independence, and has a truer zest for nature's charms, who carries a loaded flask and a full sandwich-case in his balanced pockets. After Chingford Hotel is left, and until Epping is reached, the wayside inns belong to the order known as "plain." Frequenters of Forest by-paths do not wear shoes, or carry an umbrella. Thorns and brambles are the natural enemies of both.

Drives.—I. Chingford to High Beach and Waltham Abbey, by Ranger's Road, passing Connaught Water, by Fairmead Road, across Fairmead Bottom, through the Beeches to High Beach (see p. 50), and the Wake Arms, returning direct by Epping New Road (one hour and a half's drive) or by Honey Lane to Waltham Abbey (see "walks"), back through Sewardstone and Chingford village (three hours' drive).

II. Chingford to Epping by the Wake Arms as above, thence by the New Road, alighting at Ambresbury Banks, (see "walks"), about a mile beyond the Wake Arms, and to Epping, returning to the Wake Arms, and thence by the Old Road (see p. 62.), on the left to Golding's Hill, (see "walks"), and Loughton, and back by Ranger's Road (three hours' drive).

III. Chingford to Chigwell by the Wake Arms, as above, thence by road, or right over Jack's Hill to Theydon Bois, and leaving Theydon Station on the left, by Debden Green to Chigwell, returning by Woodford Bridge to Woodford, and back by Whitehall Road (four hours' drive).

Hunting.—The Essex Foxhounds meet within easy distance of Chingford once or twice a week at Abridge, Passingford Bridge, Cooper's Sale, Epping, Nazing, and adjacent points. A private pack of harriers hunt twice a week in the neighbourhood.

A "GREEN RIDE."

CYCLING.

FOREST ROADS AND ROUTES.

In describing Epping Forest from a cyclist's point of view, the writer necessarily confines himself to the roads available for bicycling and tricycling, although it will be understood that the cyclist is not restricted in his enjoyment of the Forest beauties, but can at any time leave his machine and wander away into the pathless woods as freely as the railway or horse traveller. Of main-roads, one only that can properly be so-called traverses the Forest. This starts from *Aldgate*, and by way of *Stratford* and *Leytonstone* enters the Forest proper at *Woodford Wells*, going straight through the heart of the forest to *Epping*, continuing thence to *Cambridge*. At *Woodford Wells* this road divides, the more easterly side of the loop going through *Loughton* and rejoining the direct road at the *Wake Arms*. Of the two, the latter is the preferable, being of a better surface, although more hilly, the former being usually in a bad state of repair, and much cut up by the traffic in summer and autumn. This can be said, in a modified sense, of nearly all the roads in the district. As a rule, they are describable as "very fair, to good," gravel and flint being the usual materials composing their surfaces; but the traffic during the dry season makes them very dusty. With the exception of the loop-road above described, the highways in the Forest are very serpentine, seldom going direct from one place to another, so that in thoroughly exploring their sinuosities the cyclist will frequently have to retraverse the ground, which usually slopes gently, in frequently varied undulations, without any very formidable hills to climb, *Chingford Old Church Hill* being almost the only ascent which a cyclist of average development cannot surmount, although *Leppitt's Hill*, *Strawberry Hill*, and *Piercing Hill* are also very stiff. The usual maps of the district are perplexing, imperfect, and incomplete, making in some cases no distinction between rideable roads, footpaths, and mere beaten tracks; consequently I have been at some pains to describe, in the following series of routes, landmarks by which the wayfarer may follow the route desired. Finger-posts are comparatively few, many being erected in the public-house interest to direct the traveller by devious ways to the doors of sundry houses of refreshment; and the milestones on the few direct roads can only be depended upon when there is no doubt about their reference to the exact route which is being followed. The two Great Eastern Railway branches touching the Forest—one to *Chingford* Station, the other to *Loughton* and *Ongar*—are bridged south of *Hagger Lane* and *Snaresbrook* Stations respectively; but north of those points there are frequent level crossings, in passing over which the cyclist usually has to exercise both patience and caution: patience to wait for the gates being opened by the tardy officials, and caution lest the

irregularly-levelled metals should upset the balance of his bicycle or the spoke-threading of his tricycle.

In the following routes are given the best ways of getting into the Forest, at Chingford, from London, those ways being selected which avoid the wheelmen's bugbears, tramlines and granite sets, as far as possible; by taking these routes, Chingford can be reached from either the West End, the City, or the southern side of the river without difficulty. From Chingford the roads are taken, leading through and around the Forest, with distances ascertained in every case from actual measurement by means of a log on the writer's tricycle.

Route I.—From the West End to Chingford.

From the *Marble Arch, Hyde Park*, turn down *Edgware Road*, wood paving for 1½ miles; to *St. John's Wood Road* (right), along which macadam, usually good, extends into *Park Road* and *Albert Road*, skirting *Regent's Park;* at end, bear left down *Park Street*, across *High Street*, and up *Camden Road*—a long rise with tramlines—to the "Brecknock," keeping straight on, the road descends past "Holloway Castle," to *Holloway Road*, going straight across which, our route lies up *Seven Sisters' Road*—good granite-set paving with tramways in centre, as far as *Finsbury Park Gates*. If on a bicycle, keep straight up the *macadam road;* but if on a tricycle, turn into the *Park* and along the parallel road, passing out again at the next gate (Manor House). Still straight ahead, down the macadam descent, *Seven Sisters' Road* terminates in the *Tottenham main road*, into which we turn to the left, 8 miles from *Marble Arch*. Traversing the main road for a few yards, take the first turning to the right, where a direction-board indicates "*to Antill Road*," and following the bend and twisting of this road (inquiring for "The Ferry Boat," if in doubt), it passes over the sharp slope across the Great Eastern Railway, and the Lea Navigation bridge at *Tottenham Lock;* and a little further another bridge over the Lea at "The Ferry Boat" inn. A good gravel road then crosses the reservoirs of the East London Waterworks, coming out with a slight rise at the "Royal Standard" cross-roads, 9¾ miles from the start. The road in front goes direct to Hale End and Woodford; that on the right, to Walthamstow. The left turning should be taken, and a series of usually good-surfaced lanes winds over *Higham Hill*, past the "Crooked Billet," to *Chingford Old Church* (see p. 46). An easier climb—*Chingford Small Hill*—follows, and shortly afterwards the road divides, the branch on the left descending sharply under a picturesque avenue of trees towards Sewardstone and Waltham Abbey; taking the right turn, we shortly afterwards have to bear to the left at another fork, and—it is necessary to be particular at these corners—a short distance further on the road turns right and left, at right angles; the *New Church* is seen on the right, towards which we turn; a footpath—impracticable for cycles—goes direct across, but we must skirt the church by taking two sides of the triangle, keeping the church on our left hand, when the road proceeds straight on past Chingford *railway station*. Passing down the incline, we bear to the right, seeing the "Forest Hotel" on our dexter front, and climb the slope which leads to the *Hotel* and *Queen Elizabeth's Lodge;* the total distance from Hyde Park being 15 miles.

Route II.—From the City to Chingford.

Starting from the *Royal Exchange*, through *Threadneedle Street* (asphalte), and along *Bishopsgate Street* (wood paving) into Shoreditch (granite sets), where the tramways begin, the road bears to the right at *Shoreditch Church*, tramways continuing along *Hackney Road*. At the corner of the fifth street on the left is the "Red Lion," easily recognised by its sign, where turn left along Weymouth Terrace, and then turn first to right, and third to left, into *Cambridge Street* (macadam), which leads over the canal into *Queen's Road, Dalston*. The second turning on the right, past the canal, inaugurates a series of good by-roads, which, being carefully followed, avoid rough surfaces; this turning is *Broke Road*, whence turn first on left, and bear ahead till reaching *London Fields*, when turn to left along *Lansdowne Road;* continue to the end in *Wilton Road*, turn right, and take second on left (*Navarino Road*) over North London Railway, into *Dalston Lane;* turn right down Dalston Lane, under Great Eastern Railway, to the open space where five roads converge; make across to *Pembury Road*, which leads to *Hackney Downs*. Pass along straight forward, with the Downs on the left, along *Queensdown Road*, and at the corner by the red chapel turn *right* (*Downs Road*), and first on left (*Powell Road*) leading into *Kenninghall Road;* turn right, and cross the main *Clapton Road* at *Lea Bridge Corner*, 4¼ miles from the start. Down *Lea Bridge Road* is bumpy macadam, and at the bridge over the river the tramlines commence. Follow the tramlines past the *railway station* until the first turning on the left (*Boundary Road*), along which the best running can usually be made past *Colliers' Brewery* and *St. James's Street Station; High Street* goes to the right, but instead of taking that turn sharp to the left, round a narrow corner, and immediately to the right again, along a road which goes straight to the "Royal Standard" (7½ miles from Royal Exchange), whence Route I. can be followed, making 12¾ miles to Chingford.

Route III.—Another Way from the City.

A slightly shorter road, but not so popular as Route II., is to leave *Lea Bridge Road* at *Boundary Road*, as before directed, but instead of continuing along Boundary Road take the first turning to the *right*, following parallel to *Lea Bridge Road;* this ultimately ends in *Hoe Street*, where turn to the *left*, and take second on right up a lane which comes out in *Lea Bridge Road* again at the foot of *Chestnut Walk;* but by immediately bearing to the left, another parallel road is traversed, up a gentle rise, to *Whip's Cross*. Here the tramways are rejoined, and the road divides, that on the right going past the pond to the "Eagle," Snaresbrook; taking the left road, we again rejoin the tramline, and follow it to its termination at the "Rising Sun," on the *Woodford New Road*. Keep straight on, now, through the Forest, along a capital gravel road, slightly rising, past the Water Works, to the "Lord Napier," where a gentle descent conducts to *Woodford Green*, 9 miles from the start. Several turnings on the left direct "to Chingford," but they go *viâ* Chingford Hatch, by steep, and, in some places, impassable roads. The direct road should be followed straight ahead past

the "Castle," and up a short rise; the first turning on the left *beyond* the *Police Station* (*Whitehall Road*), being taken. This leads down towards Chingford Station, ere reaching which a turn to the right—the first past the "Queen Elizabeth" inn—leads up by the *Warren Pond* to the *Forest Hotel*, 12 miles from the Royal Exchange.

Route IV.—From Kent to Chingford.

The Thames having been crossed at *North Woolwich Ferry*, a level road passes monotonously to *East Ham*, and comes out in the main London-to-Ilford road, at *Manor Park*. Turning along this to the right—towards *Ilford*—we shortly turn off to the left, over a railway bridge, and past the Cemetery; and by a good level gravel road traverse *Epping Lower Forest*, and (following the direction-posts) come out at the "Eagle," *Snaresbrook*. Hence the prettiest route is to turn to the left, skirting the picturesque *Eagle Pond*—on the opposite side of which can be seen the Infant Orphan Asylum—and on reaching the tramlines turn sharp to the right and follow them along the New Road, as in *Route III.* The direct road from the "Eagle" passes straight up a gentle rise (macadam) past the "George" inn, to *Woodford* town, joining the *New Road* at *Woodford Green*, 8½ miles, whence Route III. is followed. The distance from North Woolwich Ferry to Chingford, by this route, is 11½ miles.

Route V.—Chingford to Wake Arms.

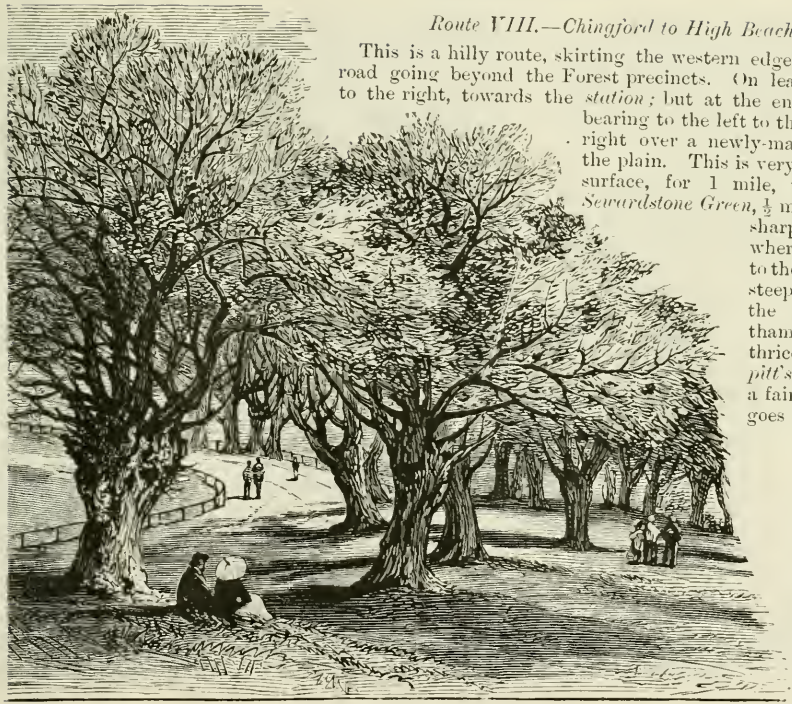
On leaving the *Forest Hotel*, turn to the left, descending ¼ mile and ascending ½ mile along *Ranger's Road*, passing *Connaught Water* on the left. Running into the direct road, which has left Woodford, continue straight northward, down a moderate incline; the horizon is bounded by high trees, *High Beach Church* spire being visible in the distance; and then up a long but easy rise past the "Robin Hood," to the "Wake Arms" inn, where several roads join, 3½ miles. The surface of this road is seldom in good condition.

Route VI.—Chingford to Wake Arms, viâ Loughton.

By *Ranger's Road*, as in Route V., reach the *Woodford Road*, but turn to *right*, and up an easy ascent for 1¼ miles to the old toll-house at the junction of roads. Turn sharp to the left round the toll-house, and the road continues up an almost imperceptible rise to the "Bald Faced Stag," whence it drops to the "Roebuck," on *Buckhurst Hill*. A fine view is gained from the summit, and a long run-down over a good road terminates in *Loughton* (4 miles from "Forest Hotel"). A stiffish rise out of Loughton, followed by a corresponding descent to the "Bag of Nails," leads to *Golding's Hill*, a steep climb up into the Forest, whence a mile of very good level ground terminates at "Wake Arms" inn, 6¼ miles.

Route VII.—Chingford to Fairmead Lodge and High Beach.

By *Ranger's Road*, as before, go northward, along the straight road for ¼ mile, when, instead of continuing as in Route V., take the road which forks off to the left, running almost parallel, but at a lower level, with capital surface, to *Fairmead Lodge*, 1¾ miles; thence a stiff pull up a short rise, amid tall trees, brings the rider out at *High Beach*, 2½ miles.



BY THE FOREST HOTEL.

Route VIII.—Chingford to High Beach, viâ Sewardstone.

This is a hilly route, skirting the western edge of the Forest, part of the road going beyond the Forest precincts. On leaving the *Forest Hotel*, turn to the right, towards the *station*; but at the end of the descent instead of bearing to the left to the railway, turn sharp to the right over a newly-made road (*Bury Path*), across the plain. This is very bad going, being of a clayey surface, for 1 mile, when it improves through *Sewardstone Green*, ½ mile of rising ground, bending sharp to the left round a cottage, where a fine view over the country to the north-west is obtained. A steep hill is now descended, and the road bends towards Waltham Abbey; turn to the right thrice, by *Mott Street*, up *Leppitt's Hill*—a stiff climb—whence a fair but very up-and-down road goes to *High Beach*, 5½ miles.

Route IX.—High Beach to Loughton.

This is a good easy cross-road, descending gently to the "Robin Hood" public-house, where it crosses the direct North road; up a slight incline and along a level bit called *Earl's Path*, through the Black Bushes; the scene then opens out, *Buckhurst Hill* bounding

the right, and at the summit of *Strawberry Hill* the roofs of Loughton are seen beneath; descending this hill, which is very steep, a pause may be made where the road divides at the bottom, to admire the conical hill on the left, capped by a pointed-roofed arbour. The road in front enters *Loughton* village, 1½ miles.

Route X.—High Beach to Wake Arms.

From the church the road passes two red-brick villas and the "King's Oak," on the right hand, with a fine prospect of the valley to the left; the road then strikes through the wood, with a good level surface, to the head of the *Rifle Range*. Here a turn to the right saves nearly a mile, but to see the range itself we must keep to the left, and descend a hill ¾ mile long to the "Woodbine" inn, the view in front, whilst descending this hill, being very fine. Turning sharp to the right then, we have a corresponding climb up *Woodridden Hill* to the "Wake Arms," 3¼ miles from High Beach.

Route XI.—Wake Arms to Epping.

This is a direct continuation of Routes V. and VI., and consists of 2 miles of good level ground; *Ambresbury Banks* (p. 68) being on the right, midway.

Route XII.—Epping to Theydon Bois.

Opposite the "Bell" at Epping, strike across *the green*, and turn down the lane to the right by the tram-car cottage; a road soon crosses, but keep straight on, noting the fine bit of valley scenery towards the east. At the fork, continue *right*, in the broader road; down a steep pitch, and up a corresponding rise. At the top, the road curves to the left, with another fine prospect of gently undulating hills, and *Theydon* village dotting the foreground below. A very steep descent—*Piercing Hill*—follows, fringed by villas; and a short up and down cut ends at *Theydon Green*, crossed by a fine avenue of trees. This is a steep but very good-surfaced 2 miles of road.

Route XIII.—Theydon Bois to Wake Arms.

From *Theydon Green*, strike off west, up *Jack's Hill* (rather a stiff climb) and by an undulating but capital surface through the bushes to *Wake Arms*, 1¾ miles.

Route XIV.—Chingford to Lord's Bushes.

Go viâ *Ranger's Road* and the *Tollhouse*, as in Route VI., but after turning round by the Tollhouse towards Loughton, take the first turn to the *right*, which gives access to *Lord's Bushes*, through which a good road descends to a *cul-de-sac* at *Monkham's Farm*, 2¾ miles.

Over the Forest in Two Rides.

Route XV.—"Forest Hotel" to *Woodford Wells Police Station* (see Route IV. reversed); *Tollgate, Buckhurst*

Hill, Loughton, and "Wake Arms," (see Route VI.); *Epping* (Route XI.); *Theydon Bois* (Route XII.); "Wake Arms" (Route XIII.); and *Ranger's Road*, (Route V.). Distance, about 10½ miles.

Route XVI.—"*Forest Hotel*" to *Sewardstone*, and *High Beach* (Route VIII.); "King's Oak," *Rifle Range*, *Woodridden Hill*, "Wake Arms" (Route X.); back across the head of the *Rifle Range* to *High Beach*; *Fairmead Lodge*, to the top of *Ranger's Road* (Route VII.); straight on to *Tollhouse* and *Lord's Bushes* (Route XIV.); and return viâ *Ranger's Road*. About 15 miles.

OVER THE FOREST IN ONE RIDE.

Route XVII.—"*Forest Hotel*" to *Ranger's Road*, *Fairmead Lodge*, and *High Beach* (Route VII.); "King's Oak," *Rifle Range*, *Woodridden Hill*, and "Wake Arms" (Route X.); *Epping*, *Theydon Bois*, and "Wake Arms" (Routes XI.—XIII.). *Loughton* (Route VI.); "Robin Hood" (Route IX.); past the top of *Ranger's Road*, to *Tollhouse* and *Lord's Bushes* (Route XIV.); return to *Tollhouse* and *Woodford Wells Police Station*, *Whitehall Road* to *Chingford* (Route III). About 22 miles.

CHINGFORD.

CHINGFORD, as a glance at the map shows, is the centre of interest both of the Forest and the district. Beyond Chingford, London is quite out of sight and mind. Pedestrians need not concern themselves with what remains of the Forest stretching south of Chingford—in scrappy sections to *Leytonstone* and *Wanstead*.

From Chingford Station a road winds up on the right to the higher breezy Forest ground. Up by the thick grove of old oaks, some picturesque gables and red chimneys above the green mark a spot of interest to the visitor. They belong to the *Forest Hotel*, the one adequate and satisfactory headquarters for Forest rambles in the district, standing on Forest ground. At the east end of its long, timber and plaster front is a smaller building of similar style, but of ancient date, known as *Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge*. From this point the stranger may take a general survey of the Forest. Just beyond the Hotel and Lodge the open, green *Chingford Plain* descends to *Connaught Waters*, seen glinting in the glade from its fringe of foliage. From this lake the broken ground spreads away in a billowy, wooded stretch to the steeper slopes on the left of *High Beach*, which shut in the horizon, the spire of High Beach Church peeping above the woods against the sky-line. From High Beach the line of Forest heights extends across on the right to the Loughton Hills.

Immediately behind the hotel, across the open sward, a belt of woods shuts in the horizon on that side. These are the *Hawk* and *Bury* Woods, which form part of the west edge of the Forest, spreading from near Chingford Station towards High Beach. Behind them is the *Lea Valley* with *Ponder's End*, the nearest railway station on that side.

The grove of old oaks facing the hotel, and fringing *The Forest Pool*, screen the high ground of *Buckhurst Hill*, rising immediately in front, about a mile distant.

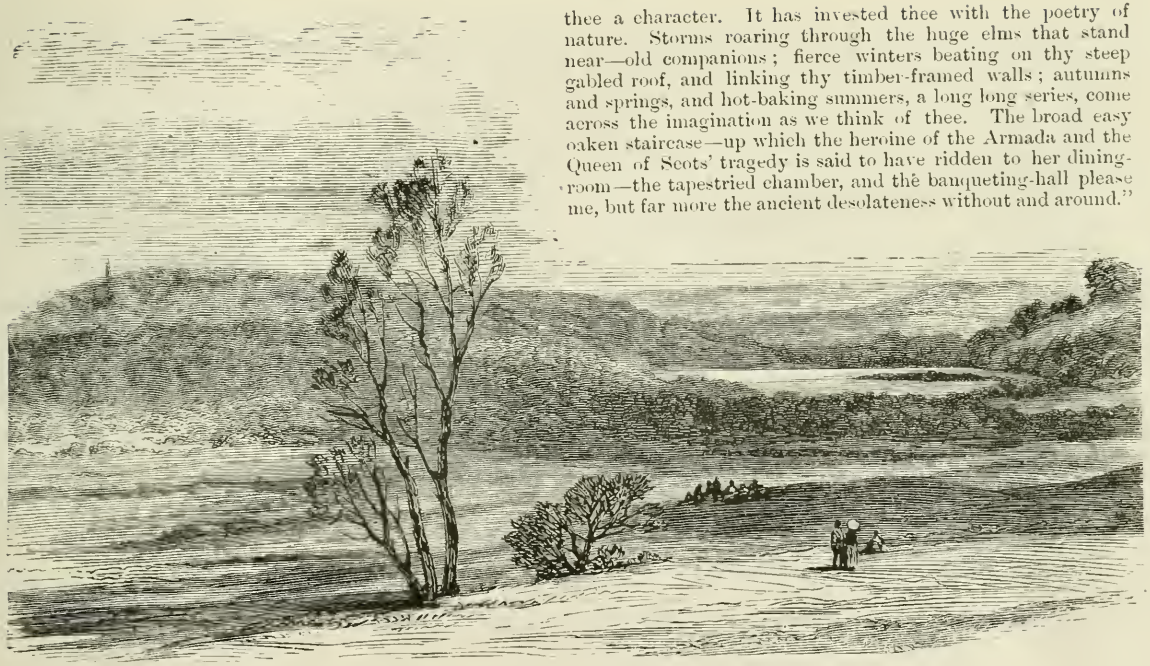
The road past the hotel from Chingford Station, and descending the plain past *Connaught Waters*, is named *Ranger's Road*. It terminates on the Loughton side in the *New Road*, which runs on the left through the heart of the Forest to *Epping*, and on the right to *Woodford* and *London*.

Modern as the exterior of

Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, so called, looks after its generous "restoration," its interior is little changed. The place is interesting, linking, as it does, the past with to-day. "Old Lodge," wrote William Howitt, "the hand of the past is impressed upon thee, and has given

VIEW FROM THE FOREST POOL, CHINGFORD.

thee a character. It has invested thee with the poetry of nature. Storms roaring through the huge elms that stand near—old companions; fierce winters beating on thy steep gabled roof, and linking thy timber-framed walls; autumns and springs, and hot-baking summers, a long long series, come across the imagination as we think of thee. The broad easy oaken staircase—up which the heroine of the Armada and the Queen of Scots' tragedy is said to have ridden to her dining-room—the tapestried chamber, and the banqueting-hall please me, but far more the ancient desolateness without and around."



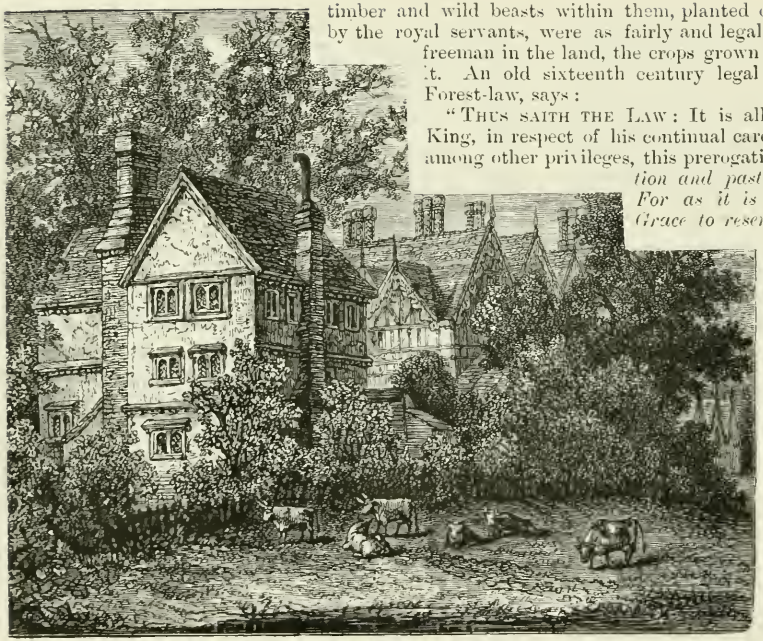
HIGH BEACH AND CONNAUGHT WATERS, FROM CHINGFORD PLAIN.

That "desolateness" exists no longer, and storms have played havoc with the old elms. But the lodge itself is probably now more like what it was when the chase-loving, king-like queen rode from the hunt up the broad massive solidly-built staircase, as a sporting celebrity of the county afterwards did to win a ten-pound wager. Good Queen Bess hunted from her youth upward, and in her fifty-seventh year was as keen a lover of field sports as in the early days of her glorious reign. Her visits to the Old Lodge and the Forest are said to have been neither few nor far between.

The lodge is a three-storied building, small, tall, square and irregular, with a high-pitched roof and gable ends. Built of rudely-plastered brick and oak framing, its chief feature is the great staircase which projects into the hall, and has six landings with between each four broad steps, each of solid oak, strong enough to sustain the traditional horse and rider. The tapestried room on the first floor is in good preservation; the basement is now used as a kitchen and parlour, and the top floor is the "room of state," with an arched timber roof resting on massive beams. In this hall were held the minor Forest Courts in days when the grim and cruel old Forest Laws were enforced.

It is usual to speak of these laws as if they "came in with the Normans." They existed here long before, and in other countries can be traced back into the remotest times. In the Bible we read of keepers of the royal forests at the time of Nehemiah's captivity in the reign of Artaxerxes. The Anglo-Danish monarchs were savagely cruel in the enforcement of their oppressive Forest Laws, and the Saxon monarchs had laws almost as severe, although they were more mercifully or carelessly administered. Norman William enacted no new laws for the protection of his forests; he enforced those already existing with perhaps unusual severity. These laws were the laws of Canute—really Knout, so called because he was regarded as the whip of the English—made by him at Winchester. They remained in force until the reign of Henry III. If any freeman chased a deer or wild beast out of the Forest, whether intentionally or by chance, so that "the wilde beast is forced by swift running to lyll out the tong, or to breathe with his tong out of his mouth," he was fined what was then an enormous sum, ten shillings. If not free but servile, the offender might, according to the law, be skinned alive. The owner of any dog that had bitten a wild beast was fined twelve hundred shillings. And if the beast chanced to be what was called a Royal one—one which had been hunted by the King, the offence was even more grave. Poor people's geese found astray in the Forest were killed, and their cattle impounded. Evidence was received in the Forest Courts that would have been peremptorily rejected in all others, mere hearsay often sufficing to condemn the accused. The punishments inflicted were cruel and disproportionate to the offences—fines of ruinous amount, loss of sight, or limbs, or life, and for a second offence certain death. Serfs or slaves were invariably slain, but even men of higher rank, esquires and knights, did not escape the gallows.

It should not be forgotten that there were special facilities for committing such crimes with impunity, and that the forests were regarded as royal property, and the



HUNTING-LODGE (BEFORE RESTORATION), ADJOINING THE FOREST HOTEL.

timber and wild beasts within them, planted or reared, and carefully preserved by the royal servants, were as fairly and legally the King's as the estate of any freeman in the land, the crops grown upon it, or the cattle reared upon it. An old sixteenth century legal authority, Manwood, writing on Forest-law, says:

"THUS SAITH THE LAW: It is allowed to our sovereign Lord the King, in respect of his continual care and labour for the whole realm, among other privileges, this prerogative: *To have his places of recreation and pastime wheresoever he will appoint. For as it is the liberty and pleasure of his Grace to reserve the wild beasts and the game to himself for his only delight and pleasure, so he may also, at his will and pleasure, make a forest for them to abide in.*"

Those were not the days of a dense population and scanty soil, and the forests were essential to the needs of the people as well as to the pleasures of the King, for they supplied fuel for their winter fires and their manufactures. It was common in olden times, and even down to our time, to make those laws most stringent and severe which were meant to repress such crimes as could be committed with the slightest chances of detection. The King's forests were open, their boundaries being merely rivers or hills,

and in their wilds and thickets even large bands of thieves could find safe hiding-places in which for years they defied the power and skill of the foresters. Thus in days when the great forest of Essex had dwindled to the much smaller forest of Waltham, and even since it had diminished still more, and become known as Epping, ruffianly hordes made it their home, and, under the name of "The Waltham Blacks," spread terror over the face of the county. So in older times lawless outcasts, runaway slaves, and escaped criminals sought refuge in these scarcely penetrable wilds, and defied pursuers. The hideous nightmare horrors thus created were but a reflex of those which existed in the days when "all conquering Cæsar" so emphatically described them as "horrid."

In recalling these things we shall have a much clearer idea of the scenes often enacted in the spacious hall of Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. Not only were matters of encroachment discussed and decided, the prices of timber, the number of faggots to be disposed of, what constituted reasonable estovers (official expenditure), the due delivery of the royal forest gifts (timber or venison, bird, beast, or fuel), some for the King's friends, some for the needy and poor, some for pious monks and nuns, the land's great dispensers of piety, learning, and charity, and so on. Under that noble oaken roof the "woodward" made oath upon his axe, the forester upon his horn, and there the surly beetle-browed ruffian, taken red-handed in some desperate struggle, and the gaunt, desperate starving wretch who had been driven by the necessities of his wife and children to steal the King's game, received swift justice and scant mercy.

There were forest rights as well as forest wrongs. Lordly abbots and queenly abbesses had the right to chase hares and foxes or deer within certain limits; freemen had their commoner's rights in the way of lopping for fuel and so on. Questions affecting these would sometimes crop up in the Forest Courts, which were always, we may be sure, crowded with complaining suitors and trembling criminals, as well as with clamorous claimants for their real or imaginary rights.

FOREST WALKS.

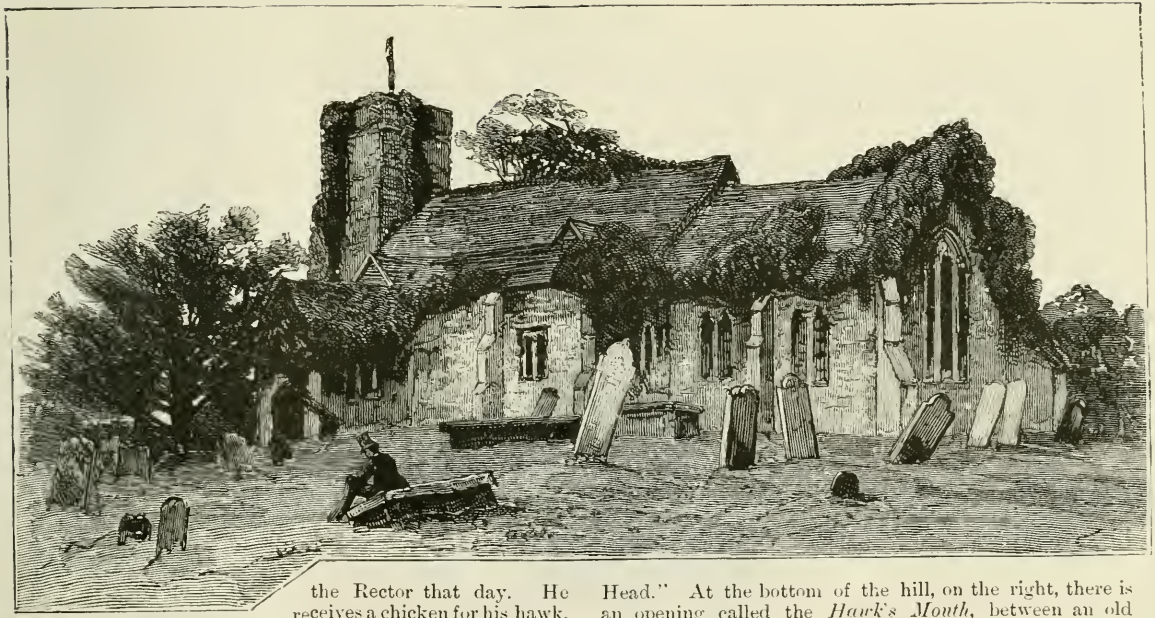
By Chingford Old Church to Hawk Wood and Bury Wood.

THIS is a pleasant preliminary stroll. The road from the hotel down past the railway station bears through a colony of new red houses on its right to old *Chingford Green*, with its ancient forge, timbered houses, and modern ornate church. Beyond the church, on the right, is the village-pond. By it stands the old brick *Lock-up*, a relic of the days of wayside "stocks" and "gallows." The country road on the left, facing the pond, leads in ten minutes to

Chingford *Old Church*. It lies back on a knoll half hidden by a fringe of old elms. Meadows slope down from its small green graveyard towards the Lea. Known now as the "Green" Church, it stands secluded and alone in its drooping decay, a suggestive memory of the old world passing away. The long, low nave is crumbling under a rank growth of ivy, which clings to the walls, clusters in thick masses on the roof, and waves above the old grey tower. The church is disused, and its interior seen through the iron bars of its paneless windows is dismantled. The once trim path to the porch, trodden by generations of rustic folk now sleeping beneath the worn and slanting stones under the sombre shadow of the yews is grass-grown, and almost obliterated. All records relating to the church are lost, and it has no place in local story and tradition. How and why it came to fall into ruin no one seems to know or care. Perhaps it is better so than to have fallen into hands such as built the new church on the Green, and suffered Vandal "restoration." Sufficient remains to recall the old country church so familiar in English landscape—a feature familiar to Americans long before they set foot here. Indeed, so characteristic is it, that Chingford Old Church might have suggested to Washington Irving, for his "Sketch Book," that pathetic sketch of the "Widow and her Son," with its rustic picture of English rural life fifty years ago. "I am fond," he writes, "of loitering about country churches, and this was so delightfully situated that it frequently attracted me. It stood on a knoll, round which a small stream made a beautiful bend, and then wound its way through a long reach of soft meadow scenery. The church was surrounded by yew-trees, which seemed almost co-eval with itself."

Morant, the old chronicler of Essex, tells how the Branswoods estate in the parish was held under the Rector of Chingford by this curious tenure: "Upon every alienation, the owner of the estate, with his wife, man-servant, and maid-servant, each single on a horse, go to the parsonage, where the owner does his homage and pays his relief in the following manner: he blows three blasts on his horn, and carries a hawk on his fist; his servant has a greyhound in a slip, both for the use of

BURY WOOD, CHINGFORD.



the Rector that day. He receives a chicken for his hawk, a peck of oats for his horse, and a loaf of bread for his grayhound. They all dine, after which the master blows three blasts on his horn, and they depart."

Returning to Chingford Green, the lane to the left of the pond and "Lock-up" descends past the "King's Head." At the bottom of the hill, on the right, there is an opening called the *Hawk's Mouth*, between an old timbered and a modern brick house. A footpath leads up the green rising ground to the high edge of *Hawk Wood*. From its side one of the widest views in the whole district is obtained. It extends over one great green plain, spreading beyond the Lea Valley till the

distant farms are mere red and yellow dots, bounded by the hills of Hertfordshire and Middlesex. The wood where it commences is a mere slip on the crest of the ridge, which slopes down on its opposite side in open ground to Chingford Plain. Further on the wood broadens out and covers the slope down into the valley.

On the highest point of this open ground, by the right fringe of the wood, rises an *obelisk*—the referring-point for Greenwich Observatory marking due north. A path runs through the centre of the wood. The smooth green trunks of the contorted and dwarf pollard beech and hornbeam stand so close that their tufted heads meet in dense bramble-like luxuriance above, and throw one dim green shadow over the sloping ground. Continuing along the central portion of the slope, the undergrowth presently grows thicker, and some fine forest oaks raise their unlopped heads above it. This is *Bury Wood*. It is here, in these thickets, that the thrush and blackbirds sing the loudest to "the early morn." The path through it ends in a cut road, the *Bury Path*, running right and left. It leads, on the right, past the head keeper's (Mr. Foster's) lodge, back to Chingford Hotel, and on the left past the "Woodman," a wayside beerhouse on the skirt of the Forest to *Sewardstone Green*, whence a pleasant footpath, just past Cashfield House, on the right, leads out by Day's Farm to *Leppit's Hill*, commanding a fine view of the Lea Valley and the Forest. From Leppit's Hill the Forest is re-entered by *Leppit's Hill Lane*, and the return to Chingford is made through the Forest, skirting its edge, back to the "Woodman," and by the "Bury Path," mentioned above, to Chingford.

OLD "LOCK-UP," CHINGFORD.

CHINGFORD TO HIGH BEACH.

(*a*) *By Hawk and Bury Woods.*

There are several pleasant Forest ways avoiding the road to High Beach. One is by Hawk and Bury Woods, as shown in the preceding walk to the "Woodman." From the "Woodman," the west or left edge of the Forest, if kept, serves as a guide right along to High Beach, though it should not be followed too closely, as the woods thin away towards the sides. Passing through a belt of pollard oak and thick undergrowth of green, the open sward of Woodman's glade is crossed, and then the thicket on the facing side. In the midst, overgrown with dense foliage, the *Cuckoo Brook*, which trickles towards Connaught Waters, is crossed. The way lies over it through the wood, across *Ludgate Plain*, a rushy space, through the thicket rising on the facing side, where the trees begin to show less traces of past lopping, and down into the broad, green glade of *Fairmead Bottom*. Crossing it, a dense wood ascends breast-deep in brake and bramble, thick with glistening holly, and in May-time full of the scent of the sweet hawthorn. This sloping *Hill Wood* rises to a broad belt of noble beeches. Their smooth tapering branches, meeting high above, shade the cool sward still brown with last year's strewn leaves. Here and there shafts of sunlight pierce the tops, fleck the pale lichen-tinted trunks, touch the bronzed fallen leaves with gold, and light up arched vistas of road and glade beyond. These, the ancient trees of High Beach, fringe the highest Forest ground. The road which mounts the hill and breaks the centre of the wood, comes from Chingford, and leads to the green open plateau beyond the beeches. A road branches off at a sign indicating the way to the "King's Oak." The spire of High Beach Church rises above the trees just beyond. This road to the "King's Oak" is taken, and in five minutes leads on to an open height. The chief attraction of this much-frequented and cockney spot is the sunny expanse of country it commands. Right and left spreads the green Lea Valley, with the wide pastures and woods of Hertfordshire and Middlesex, stretching to the horizon hills beyond. It is on this spot, with its fair prospect, that the Queen commemorated the dedication of the Forest to the people. The tree planted by Her Majesty stands within its paled protection on the sward just beyond the "King's Oak" inn. Here, too, once stood the ancient stump of an oak, famous as that which tradition asserts was named after our last Saxon king, Harold. In what remote period the tree became associated with this monarch, tradition sayeth not. We only know that here his manors were; that in these wild woods, both before and after he wore a crown, he must have enjoyed many a glorious day's hunting, and possibly he planted it, or some stirring adventure now forgotten, of which this spot was the site, gave the ancient oak its royal name.

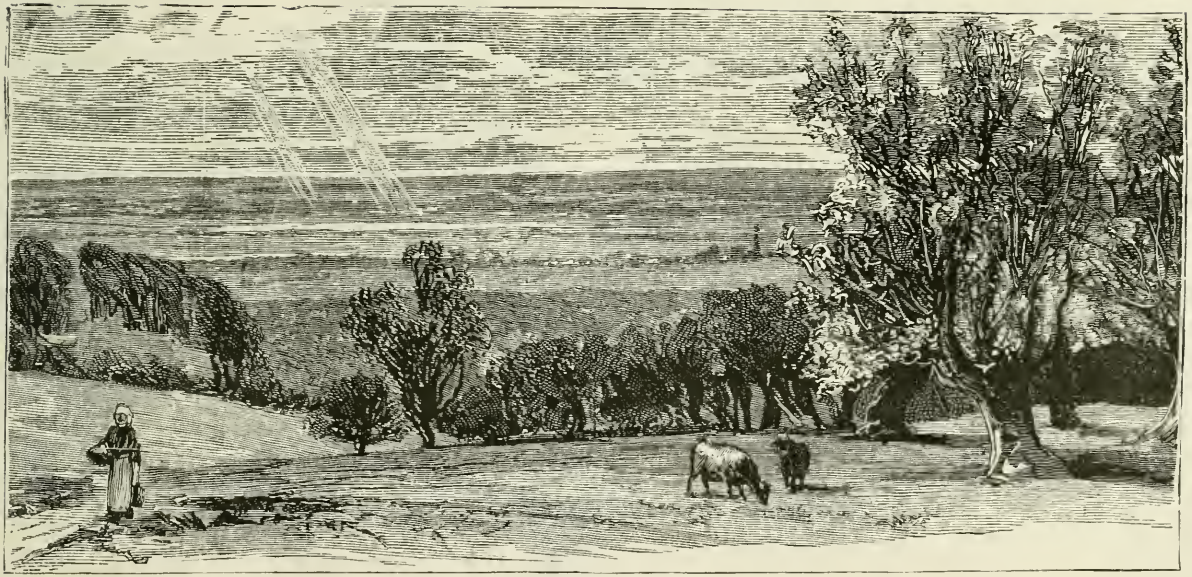
BY CONNAUGHT WATERS.

Down in the hollow are one or two taverns, and by one, a mere cottage—which exhibits an ancient pistol, cutlass and spurs, supposed to be in some way or another connected with the butcher-highwayman—is what is known as *Dick Turpin's Cave*.

Nests of highwaymen and footpads once abounded hereabouts, and defied the runners. Dick Turpin is one of the better known of these gentry, whose adventures, magnified by an unwholesome form of fiction, have given a certain interest to places associated with his name. Here at High Beach he had one of his favourite hiding-places, and all through the Forest, and in all the towns and villages nearest to it, he and his gang made themselves terrible. Originally the rascal—born in Essex—was apprenticed to a Whitechapel butcher, and was so disorderly that his absence proved a source of considerable relief to his master. Marrying and starting in business for himself at Luton, by stealing instead of buying his beasts he hoped to make money at the expense of all the neighbouring gentry and farmers. Detected at last by some labourers employed by a farmer at Plaistow, he escaped the officers by jumping from a back-room window of his house. Then he became one of a gang of smugglers, and for a time was successful. Afterwards he joined a band of deer-stealers in Epping Forest, whose depredations not only made deer scarce in the Forest, but seriously thinned the surrounding parks. The keepers being strengthened in numbers, the gang took to house-breaking. Their practice was to knock at a door, and rush in when it was opened. The brutal character of the "dashing highwaymen" is seen in his leading the gang to an old lady's residence at Loughton. Turpin knocked, and on the servant opening the door they rushed in, blindfolded the poor old creature and her maid, and demanded money. The mistress persisted in denying that she had any in the house, and the burglars having vainly searched, were inclined to believe her. But Turpin, more cruelly determined, thrust the woman upon the burning coals, and despite her agonized shrieks and struggles, held her there, until at last, to escape torture, she told them where they would find her carefully concealed store of gold, in all about four hundred pounds. At another time, from motives of revenge, they broke into the house of one of the Forest keepers named Mason, beat him to death and ransacked the house, smashing the furniture, and carrying off a hundred and twenty guineas. Turpin's chief associates in crime were named Fielder, Rose and Walker. On several occasions, when disappointed of expected plunder, they were guilty of the most horrible acts of cruelty and violence. After they had beaten one poor fellow with the heavy knobs of their riding-whips, and inflicted wounds on his head with the butt-end of a pistol, they threatened to chop his legs off, and threw over him a kettle of boiling water. All this gang paid for their crimes except Turpin, who contrived by superior strength and activity to escape. He and a highwayman named Tom King next increased the dangers of the Epping road by robbing together. But so hot was the hunt for them, so heavy the reward, and so dire the threats against all who should give them shelter, that even the Forest taverns were closed against them, and labouring men formed themselves into little armed bands for their capture. He had a narrow escape from one of these while in a thicket concealing a cave,

said to be this one at High Beach. Being discovered, he pretended to surrender to a man whose gun was levelled at his head, but directly the muzzle was lowered he leaped into his cavern, and from it, shot his would-be captor dead. He had other escapes as narrow, and was at last so hunted by men and blood-hounds, so harassed and worn by terror and hardships, that he was glad to escape into Yorkshire, where he took to horse-dealing, and being imprisoned under the name of John Palmer—Palmer was his wife's maiden-name—for shooting one of his landlord's fowls, other charges of horse-stealing were brought against him, and for these he was condemned to death, and hanged on April 17th, 1734. He stood on the ladder of the gallows nearly half an hour in conversation with the executioner, before he leaped from it with the noose round his neck, and after struggling for five minutes, hung motionless and dead. The story of his ride to York is fiction, although the feat was performed by another criminal, a Yorkshire man named Nevison. Turpin is described as having broad, high cheek-bones, a short face with a narrow chin, and deeply pitted with small-pox.

The evil reputation of Epping Forest is of ancient date, and all through our social records stories of its terrors crop up. The Anglo-Roman travellers had not more dread of its coverts and thickets than had those who lived in its neighbourhood after the Peace of 1698, when, as Macaulay notes, a large number of discharged soldiers turned robbers, and were so daring and numerous, that for some time cavalry every evening patrolled the roads leading into it. The "Annual Register" tells how, in 1775, the Norwich stage-coach was attacked by a band of highwaymen, three of whom were shot by the guard before he was himself killed. On the 22nd of January, 1793, the carriage of Mr. Alderman Palmer was stopped on the New Epping Road by a single highwayman, who carried off the Alderman's watch and fourteen guineas.



FROM HIGH BEACH.

CHINGFORD TO HIGH BEACH.

(*b*) *By the Green Ride and Fairmead Bottom* (about 3 miles).

A more direct Forest way, avoiding roads, to High Beach, is by a newly-constructed *Green Ride*, opening from the wood immediately behind the "Forest Hotel." Standing at the back of either the Hotel or the Hunting Lodge, and looking down across the treeless plain, an opening is seen on the side of the wood, about a hundred yards on the right of *Bury Path*, the road crossing the plain on the left. The ride entered, the way lies along the broad, cleared track, boggy in parts after wet, through a pretty wood abounding in birds. It crosses the two or three open glades referred to in the preceding High Beach route. On entering the third and broader *Almshouse Plain*, dotted with bushes, the woods of High Beach are seen rising in front. Crossing it, and passing through the opposite thicket, Fairmead Bottom is entered, with *Fairmead Lodge* on the right, at the base of the wood. The ride continues up into the wood on the left of the lodge, and there ends. Bearing up through the beeches towards the right, Fairmead Road is entered, and this taken, leads to the "King's Oak" (see previous route).

CHINGFORD TO HIGH BEACH.

(*c*) *By Ranger's Road, Connaught Water, and the "Red Path"* (3 miles).

This is the least interesting and road route. Taking *Ranger's Road*, past the hotel, to *Connaught Waters*, a *red path* is seen branching on the left just after passing the water. This crosses some thinly-wooded ground into *Fairmead Road*, which, taken on the left, leads past Fairmead Lodge through the Beech Wood, to the "King's Oak," as above.

BEECH WOOD AT HIGH BEACH.

CHINGFORD TO EPPING.

By the Green Ride, Loughton Ancient Earthworks, Debden Slade, Sand Pit Plain, Little Monk Wood, Great Monk Wood, the Ditches, Ambresbury Banks, Epping Thicket (about 7 miles).

This is one of the longest, least frequented, most varied, interesting and troublesome walks in the Forest. Chingford to Epping by road, 6 miles, is pleasant in its way. But by this route, along the Green Ride, so called, the high-road is entirely avoided, and not a hundred yards of the entire walk is by road of any kind. It opens up each varied side of the Forest and its surrounding scenery—the cool, leafy glades so peculiarly English, the stretches of heathery slopes and rushy dells and breezy silver-birch-dotted uplands recalling the Western Highlands in miniature, the woods of one variety of tree growing apparently in the prim order of a German forest; clusters of ancient beech recalling the Forest of Fontainebleau; and again, stretches of dark, distant wooded hills reminding one of the lower ridges of the Black Forest, as they rise along the Rhine Valley between Bâle and Baden.

It is only fair to say that the writer of this "Walk" tried to follow the route as it is given five or six times before succeeding. He has no object in magnifying its mazes, the contrary rather; but remembering his own experiences—how he tried and failed, map and compass in hand, alone, and with others possessing keener eyes and wits; how at last, reduced to seek the aid of the Forest-keepers, he was guided over the ground, noting each path and bend and height and hollow as he went; and how, returning from Epping and trying to follow his own notes "backwards," he dismally failed, and found himself half-way well out of the track and in the high-road—it is as well to warn the pedestrian that he may miss some of the points and paths. It scarcely matters, perhaps, if he does, for in missing these he may discover others as pleasant. In any case, he does well who carries a flask and starts bowed down with the weight of substantial sandwiches. One house only is passed on the way, a keeper's lodge; and if the day be aptly chosen, from Wednesday to Friday inclusive, not half a dozen folk may be met on the path all day. The tiresome details which follow are the result of diligent plodding again and again over the ground.

Route.—A black wooden barn stands close to *Queen Elizabeth's Lodge*, on *Ranger's Road*. By the barn the *Green Ride*, a broad track, slopes down *Chingford Plain* towards *Connaught Waters*, and enters the thin wood left of the lake. A short distance beyond the lake it divides, and the broad green clearing on the right is taken. A solitary full-grown oak, dominating the pollard growth around, stands in the centre at the end. By this tree, with its circular seat, named after Mr. Bedford, in recognition of his good work in preserving the people's

Forest, but sometimes known as *Grimston's Oak*, five green paths diverge. The straight ride on the left, with the view of High Beach Wood rising at the end, is taken. The ride after some five minutes makes a deep dip. The hollow is curious for the luxuriant growth of ferns smothering it, and sending their great leaves six or seven feet up among the pollard boughs. Beyond this dip a second solitary oak, also with its circular seat, forms a central feature of the ride. Beyond this tree, the ride continues about a hundred yards, then crosses a ditch into *Fairmead Road*, and ends. Looking straight across the open ground, another road, the *New Road*, is seen running parallel with Fairmead Road. On the facing ground rising beyond this second road, a young plantation, enclosed by a wire fence, is visible; and just to the left of it a yellow patch, denoting some gravel-pits by the edge of a wood. Crossing the roads and plain towards this plantation, and crossing the gravel-pits, a rough road is reached just behind. Taken to the left it leads in two minutes to another road at right angles, with a fenced pond at the corner. This cross road is *Earl's Path*, leading on the left to the "Robin Hood" inn, on the right into Loughton. Crossing Earl's Path, a broad path, the *Green Ride* again, is seen opposite the pond and taken. It goes straight through the level wood some little way, and then begins to descend, overlooking at the brow a striking Forest view. From the deep hidden hollow below, a circular-pointed hill rises in front, draped in a dense growth of green. Beyond and commanding it, rise a broader sweep of wooded heights, quite shutting in the silent valley. The pedestrian, to observe this view, should halt where the ride begins to descend. At this point it steeply slopes down towards the left; but a narrower track continues straight down towards the right. This track is taken. It leads down into a broad and dry part of the hollow, called *Debden Slade*. Kept correctly it enters the low, open space by the side of a small pollard oak, standing alone just in front of the track and the wooded ride. If the Slade is entered a little too much right or left, it is well not to leave it till the green dry space is reached, and the oak struck. In front of the oak a narrow but clearly cut ditch crosses the Slade towards the opposite rising wood. This ditch is followed for about thirty yards to the rushy level watercourse it serves. The watercourse resembles the Green Ride, and might be mistaken for it. But where the ditch ends and the watercourse commences, an open path is seen sloping on the right. This is the Green Ride, which broadens as it ascends. At the top of the slope the ride suddenly ceases, and continues a narrow path through what looks like a high ditch-bank, topped with pollard oaks. It is seen rising higher and more defined towards the left, where a path skirts the front of it. This bank is the southern part of what are known as

The *Ancient Earthworks* of Loughton Camp. Before exploring them the visitor should note the path between the bank where he stands, as he will return to it to reach Monk Wood. It proceeds right through the earthworks and comes out on the northern side, at what is called the Gate. It is now generally accepted, since the excavation and investigations of the Essex Field Club, that the Camp belongs to some remote pre-Roman period. In cutting through rampart and ditch fragments of a primi-

THE GREEN RIDE THROUGH EPPING THICKS.

tive pottery were found, probably of early British origin. The ground enclosed by the earthworks, some 11 or 12 acres, is covered with a close growth of pollard trees. Only the broken ridge of ground forming the remnants of the ramparts, themselves overgrown with trees, serves to indicate the site. The spot, apart from its antiquarian aspect, has an interest as being still one of the wildest, and commanding one of the finest views in the Forest. It will serve the modern Briton for a secluded *al-fresco* luncheon as well as it served the Ancient Briton for stubborn defence. Continuing across the encampment along the path by which it was entered from *Debden Slade*, the path, on reaching another running right and left at the north-west "gate," or opening, appears suddenly to end. A fringe of trees stops the way. Facing the path stand a large holly-tree and a pollard oak. A narrow track is just visible on the left side of the oak, and is taken. It bears slightly to the right in a north-westerly course over rough ground, through brake and ling, crosses an open rushy space, called *Sand Pit Plain*, and continues by a broad path, which narrows as it descends into a heathery track. The track leads down to the edge of *Little Monk Wood*, covering with its beeches a low circular hill. The path ceases in a soppy hollow. The right slope of the wood is taken and followed round till a small running brook is reached, half hidden by young beeches overhanging. Descending and crossing the brook, where a rough worn track is seen, Great Monk

AN ANCIENT BEECH.

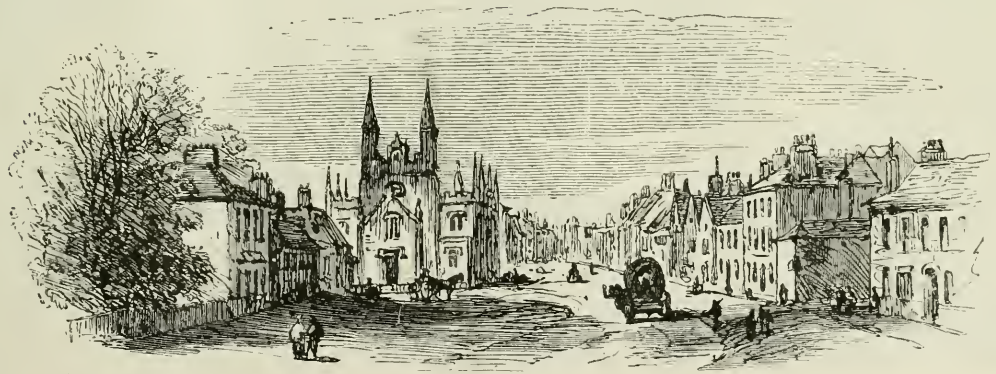
Wood, a fine spread of beeches about ½ mile in length, is entered. The brown ground is a deep carpet of dead rustling leaves. The pathless way lies through the length of the wood, keeping as near as possible in the centre, bearing first north-east, and then a little more towards the east. The wood ends almost on the edge of the *Old Road*, which runs due north to the "Wake Arms," on the Epping *New Road*, and due south past Golding's Hill into Loughton. Emerging from Monk Wood, a *keeper's lodge* should be seen, and must be found on the opposite side of the *Old Road*. Left of the lodge, where Luffman, a veteran Forest-keeper, lives, the *Green Ride* is entered again. From this point the ride is followed to Epping, and can scarcely be mistaken. Just beyond the lodge it descends into the deep hollow of *Hangboy Slade*, mounts the facing side through the flowering *Gorse Ground*, and up through a poldered wood into a broad green track crossing it. This track, called the *Ditches*, is taken to the left. It passes through some high pretty ground, sprinkled with holly, oak, and silver birch, little known. The path crosses the *Theydon Road*, which leads on the left to the "Wake Arms," and enters *Long Running*, a fine expanse of heather dotted with dwarf oaks and silver birch. The close growth of young beech and birch seen on the right is *Theydon Wood*, one of the thickest and most intricate parts of the Forest. About ½ mile beyond the Theydon Road the path divides. On the left it leads into the southern side of *Ambresbury Banks;* on the right the ride proceeds towards Epping. Soon after passing the Banks, it enters *Epping Thicks* between a noble line of oak and beech, forming a stately avenue through this northern corner of the Forest. Another broad avenue, crossing it obliquely, runs on the left back to Ambresbury Banks and the Epping New Road, and on the right to *Piercing Hill*, which commands a wide view of this primeval portion of the Forest, of the Epping heights, and the Thames Valley on the far right. The ride, following the billowy contour of the ground, falls and rises in sunny slopes, and broadens. The ancient trees droop their long leafy branches lower to the greensward, and the deep undergrowth of holly, gorse and bracken, on either hand, grows thicker in these Epping Thicks as one advances. At length it rises and ends on the edge of open Epping *Green*. Crossing it to the left the New Road is reached, and followed for a mile, commanding fair views over the country-side on the right, up into the woodland town of

EPPING,

which stands three hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level, on the ridge of a line of hills extending north and south through the Forest, a small old-fashioned market-town. Dull and quiet appears this elongated straggling little place, with its two irregular lines of houses stretching away from Epping Upland, by the church, down to Epping Townside, and Epping Street. But it was a bustling, busy, thriving place enough in the old coaching-days, as its many inns, open, or now turned to other uses, remind us. Then day and night, in quick succession, came coach after coach, with merry soundings of long horns, and jolly jingling of harness to the rhythm of beating hoofs, and the occasional explosive crack of some cheery coachman's long-thonged whip. Then hostlers and stable-helps

abounded, and were proud of the magical celerity with which they substituted for steaming foam-flecked horses, the fresh, brisk, cloth-covered teams led out to take their places. Then the guard's horn awakened a responsive clanging of the inn-yard bell, and waiters, all listless, idle, and half-asleep, started into sudden life and activity. Then excited people crowded to doors and windows to watch the coach go by, or gathered in gossiping and laughing knots to see the horses changed; while glasses were hurriedly emptied, and hastily ordered refreshments were rapidly consumed. Then all Essex gloried in the fame of Epping butter, and Epping cream; then Epping pork was of a mellow whiteness, a chicken-like tenderness, and a specially delicious flavour; and a basket of Epping sausages was a gift gracious and savoury. Then market-day brought country-folk in crowds, until all the big roomy old inns were overflowing with them, until the broad, long street was full of their noises, and the market-place was a farmyard fair.

But, alas! these glories are departing, not to return. Railways have diverted both the traffic and the trade of Epping, and something ails the place, it has grown so staid and dull. Two of its best remaining inns are the "Cock," and "Thatched House."



EPPING. 5—2

EPPING TO CHINGFORD.

By the New Road, Ambresbury Banks, Copt Hall, and High Beach.

Suppose that we have reached this little woodland town either by the walk from Chingford (p. 61) or from Liverpool Street by the Ongar branch of the Great Eastern Railway ; and suppose we are now in its rustic dozy street, which is the Newmarket road, scarcely 17 miles from the dust and roar of town.

The programme is to pass a-foot through the Forest to the Hunting Lodge of Queen Elizabeth at Chingford, and there to end a pleasant summer-day's stroll with a goodly dinner, for which this walk should provoke a portentous appetite, in Chingford's most comfortable and convenient of hotels, and either to stay there the night, or return to town from the station close by. To the visitor fresh from town the Forest air comes with a brisk buoyancy and sweetness. The sun is brighter, the sky bluer, the clouds higher than they were. We are where our great-great-grandfathers made holiday from London, setting up their butts for archery and their rings for bouts of single-stick or wrestling, their may-poles for dancing and their tents for feasting, when "Hey ! for Epping Uptown !" was one of the most welcome shouts in London's ancient City.

From Epping the way lies south along the undulating turnpike-road, which leads to London through the Forest. The road, as roads go, is a modern one, for the Forest has no ancient highways. Reaching the bordering wilderness of glade and thicket, we have on our right hand that part of it known as *The Warrens*, reached from the road over a tall ladder-like stile, and about a hundred yards on our left, one of its most famous spots, and one of great historic and antiquarian interest—

AMBRESBURY BANKS.

This is believed to be the last fortified camp of the Britons, under their heroic Queen Boadicea, from which they marched to give battle to their Roman masters, and suffered a crushing and bloody defeat. It extends over a circuit of about a mile under the light-excluding boughs of small thickly-growing hornbeams and hazels, beech and oaks. The trees, dwarfed by repeated loppings, and disfigured with knobs and wens, look weird and strange in the green twilight of their low leafy crowns. Ancient and grey, wrinkled and gnarled, writhing and twisted into the most fantastic forms, here in intertwining groups like the strugglers in some desperate strife, there half prostrate, as if arrested in the very act of falling, they stand amidst the tangled undergrowth, with thickets of suckers shooting up about them, each tree more or less decayed, strangely impressive and solemn memorials of one of England's most ancient battlefields. So overgrown is the camp, that you may wander all about it without suspecting that you are on it, until you begin

patiently to follow its broken clues, finding it here by some gentle declivity, worn down by the accidents of time and weather, there by some rising banks which are evidently artificial, and farther on where ditch and boldly rising earth-work above it are conspicuous as the work of warlike hands familiar with their task. In two places, for the sake of making a straight new road between *Debden Green* and *Epping Market*, the bank has been cut through and the ditch filled up; but originally the camp, which must have been made within the very heart of an all but impenetrable forest, was weakened

POLLARDS ON AMBRESBURY BANKS.

by no regular entrances. The space its irregular form covers is nearly 12 acres, and it stands half in the parish of Epping, and half in that of Waltham. Old soldiers coming to this spot, and recognising its meaning without knowing the tradition of its origin, have fallen into the error, so common under like circumstances all over the country, of attributing it to the time of the great puritan rebellion, and the handiwork of Oliver Cromwell.

The Trinobantes' camp was, for a time, doubtless one of perfect safety, accumulating stores and growing daily stronger. The fierce, yellow-haired queen's standard of revolt was a rallying-centre for all the land. The Iceni gathered upon the woodland hills surrounding Colchester in overwhelming numbers, and flocked towards it. The united tribes defeated a legion of Roman veterans, the ninth, and destroyed the whole of its infantry. They frightened the Romans from London, and laid it in smoking, blood-reddened ashes. In the course of a few days, quarter being refused to all, they had slain in fight, in massacres, and deaths by torture, no less than seventy thousand souls.

Tacitus pictured the horrors of that revolt. Terrible omens foretold it. The Romans were filled with fear. Their statue of Victory fell as if in the act of yielding to a foe. Mysterious howlings arose in the theatres, strange noises disturbed their meetings in the council-house; fearful apparitions were seen in open day, and inspired women cried aloud in the streets, warning them to fly the coming slaughter and destruction, while night after night the sky was red in the flames of destroying fires. Recovering from their panic, reinforced by fresh troops, the Roman army advanced, and here, says tradition, near their strong camp, somewhere between Epping and Waltham, was fought the great battle. The Britons were from one hundred to two hundred thousand strong, far outnumbering their better disciplined foes. Boastful and confident, they counted upon an easy victory, and brought their women and children to witness it from rows of carts ranged in a line behind. Massed together behind their great shields, with the thickets at their back, the Romans patiently sustained the successive onslaughts of their foes, until signs of disorder and confusion became apparent. Then, assuming that wedge-like form so often afterwards adopted, they attacked in turn, and with such dire effect that eighty thousand of their enemies were left dead in the Forest, the women and children and the barricade of carts increasing the wild confusion of the flight. The Roman loss was four hundred.

Standing here on the site of camp and battle, it is pleasant to think how peace and safety have been built up in this dear old isle of ours since the days when Celts had sway, and Epping Forest was a scene of pitiful internal strife.

Leaving the old British camp, we return to the road, and taking the left-hand direction, pursue it until we find, almost directly and on our right, another road, by a sign-post, plunging into the Forest. Following it, we come soon after to where we see on the right the gates of *Copt Hall Park*, with the lodge beside them. Beyond these gates lies a glorious bit of Forest scenery, called *The Warren*, of which the chief portion spreads away to the right from the gates. Parts of this wood—for such it is—lying in the deeper and darker hollows are singu-

larly suggestive of their past history, when they formed the home and hiding-places of reckless outcasts, upon whose lives a price had been set, and against whom every man's hand was raised, as theirs was against every man. From these deep thickets they stole when night fell on the Forest to slay the deer, or snare the smaller game, to cut and carry away the timber, or rob and slay some lonely traveller. Now and then they would break into the quiet home of a too conscientious and active game-keeper, to revenge in torture and death some comrade's capture and execution. The terror of the country round, few indeed were those who dared venture after dusk along the New Road between London and Epping, unless they were either exceptionally bold men, heavily armed, or strongly escorted; and there was a time when even cavalry troops were employed constantly to guard the roads, now so secure and peaceful. This state of things was not put an end to until about the middle of the last century, when the estate, having long before passed into the hands of an old Yorkshire family named Conyers, Mr. John Conyers cut down the thickets, made paths through the wood, drove out the robbers and poachers, and, by erecting cottages and converting waste portions of the park or forest into cultivated land, succeeded in making the violent depredators honest, civilized and peaceable labourers upon his own estate: a worthy man, and one to be honourably remembered here in Essex.

About a hundred years since, the Warren, being regarded by its owner as a profitless waste, covered as it then was with hornbeams, pollards, and brushwood, furze and gorse, impenetrable masses of brambles and thorny brakes, he offered it to a speculative farmer in the neighbourhood for 2s. 6d. an acre, on a lease of forty years. The farmer declining this apparently tempting offer, it was ploughed up and sown with the seeds of almost every kind of tree, thrown in and left to chance. The young plants sprang up and flourished, and grew to form at last one of the finest woods in the county.

Copt Hall was so named by the Saxons from *Coppe*, the top of a hill. It was of old "a place of pleasure and privacy" for the successive mitred abbots of Waltham (see p. 84). Thence they went a-hunting here in the Forest. There they received hospitably distinguished guests; and thence in stately procession they rode forth to take their place in the great councils of the nation. The Princess, afterwards Queen Mary, was living at Copt Hall in 1551, when three of her servants were summoned before the Privy Council, and their royal mistress was by them informed that mass was no longer to be performed there by her Roman Catholic chaplains. Mary was, however, as she said, ready to obey the royal commands in all things except matters of religion. Mass she would have. But she showed less tolerance than she then received in the first year of her reign, when three years afterwards she gave orders for burning alive "such obstinat persones" as also refused to recognise the royal right to dictate to them their religion. Her right to have the mass was one thing; their right to refuse it was quite another. In 1572 the old palace of the abbots passed from the Fitz Archers, by sale, into the hands of Sir Thomas Henneages and his wife Anne, in fee tail. Sir Thomas was a person of high rank and power in the Court of Queen Elizabeth, Captain of the Royal Guards, Treasurer of the Chamber, Privy Councillor, and Vice-

Chamberlain of the Royal Household. By him it was rebuilt and greatly enlarged from designs by Thorpe, its most remarkable feature being a great gallery fifty-six yards in length. From this nobleman it passed by marriage to Sir Moyle Finch, from whom it came into the possession of the Sackvilles, who made it their seat. Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the famous poet and wit—of whom Lord Macaulay said his songs had "the easy vigour of Suckling," while his satires sparkled "with wit as splendid as that of Butler," author of "Hudibras," lived here. Here, too, the rival poet and dramatist of Dryden, portly, dissipated Thomas Shadwell, his personal enemy and his successor to the post of Laureate, wrote that famous old comedy "The Squire of Alsatia," borrowed so freely from "The Adelphi" of Terence. The Earl of Rochester wrote:

> 'Of all our modern wits none seem to me
> Once to have touched upon true comedy
> But hasty Shadwell and slow Wycherley.'

In a different spirit Dryden wrote of him:

> 'I will not rake the dunghill of thy crimes,
> For who would read thy life that read thy rhymes?'

In June, 1660, when the people of England, weary of their Puritan rulers, went wild with delight and joy because Monarchy had been restored, Charles II. dined here as the guest of the Earl of Middlesex, on which occasion it is said he struck a loin of beef with his sword in token of knighthood, and jestingly called it "Sir-Loin." After passing successively into the possession of the Earls of Winchelsea and the Lords Grey, it fell, late in the seventeenth or early in the eighteenth century, into the hands of the Conyers, formerly of Yorkshire, but then of Walthamstowe, by one of whose descendants, in 1753, the dilapidated old Elizabethan mansion, with the ancient chapel of the abbots, were pulled down, and a little distance from their site was reared the present house, which is neither particularly handsome nor picturesque. Copt Hall, about fifty years or more ago, was the abode of a mighty hunter, to whom all the Nimrods of the county flocked; and many a gay carouse, after the pleasure of the chase, has made its roof-tree ring with laughter and songs of jovial companionship.

Continuing our way past the Lodge, we follow the line of the park palings over rising ground, broken and rough, amidst ancient trees and bramble-bushes, to rejoin the Lodge Road at a point farther on, where it goes down into the hollow known as *Copt Hall Green*. Here, in a shady corner to the left, stood, until November, 1884, quaint old *Copt Hall Farm*, which had been known for some years before that time as an inn, with the sign of "The Rose and Crown." Of this house a ghost story is told. It runs thus:

There was once a gentleman of Essex, named Woode, who shocked his more superstitious neighbours by jesting at what he called their weak-minded notions about ghosts and spirit-visitors. He one day came to this quaint farmhouse, in its solitary nook, on a visit to his old friend, the proprietor, who it seems was in trouble, and greatly needed a generous friend's advice and aid. And on a dull, misty evening in March, when the gloom of the twilight was thickening in the low sitting-room, and the corners nearest the small low windows were already dark, he sat with his mournful friends in quiet talk. The

wind was moaning drearily outside, and the rain dashing in fitful gusts upon the glass. The host and his wife had been bewailing a noble fortune wasted. Mournfully they talked of when they would be turned out of the home where they had passed so many happy years, and enjoyed so many merry meetings. They recalled memories of the dead, who had shared their pleasures. Strange noises came in hoarse, faint whispers from the neighbouring forest, suggesting weird thoughts of ghosts and supernatural terrors. The hostess left the room to send in candles, and about three minutes after a fearful crash, mingled with shrieks, rang through the house. Mr. Woode, alarmed, rose; the husband—his nerves already unstrung—remained seated, trembling so that for a few minutes he was unable to move. At last he mustered courage enough and hastily ascended the stairs, followed by a frightened maid-servant. Mr. Woode, remaining at the room door, heard directly after another fearful shriek, and leaping up the stairs, nearly fell over his host, flat on his face upon the landing, in a pool of blood. The serving-maid was beside him in a fit. On the stairs above, all bedabbled with crimson smears, lay the mistress! To her he first gave attention, carrying her into the kitchen while he pumped for her a glass of water. To his horror, application to the pump-handle brought not water, but a blood-red stream! Bathed in icy perspiration, and trembling, full of fear and horror, the unbeliever again applied to the pump. Again the glass was filled with crimson fluid, and again he threw away its loathsome contents, but still the pump-handle banged and creaked. Gradually the red became pink, and the pink paler, and at length pure water filled the glass. He was using this to bathe the lady's face, and pouring a little of it into her mouth, when the terrified husband and maid-servant came in, and the other servants quickly joined them.

The lady's recovery explained all. She had some choice cherry-brandy, and to preserve it from the greedy harpies of the law she had put it on a row of jars on the shelf of a disused cupboard, which contained also the trunk of the pump below. While reaching a-tiptoe to bring down a jar for her guest the rotten shelf gave way, the jars were smashed, and the crimson fluid poured over her and down the trunk of the pump; hence her shrieks and her fall. Mr. Woode had been pumping out not, as he thought, blood, but cherry-brandy and water. The host had stumbled up the stairs, and the blood in which his face reposed was from his nose. The frightened maid had tumbled fainting over him, and—that is the ghost story of Copt Hall Farm.

A new red-brick inn stands on the site of the old farm. Turning our back upon it, we follow the road before us past some small cottage-inns, with *Copt Hall Park* upon our right, until we come to a footpath also on the right leading along by the Park, to where the old Hall itself is seen standing beside its gardens.

From that point the wanderer may make his way either over the woody slopes and hollows to the ladder-stile already mentioned as being in the Epping *New Road* (see p. 68), or return through the Forest by the *Lodge Road*—not that by which we came—for there are two so named, because both lead to the Lodge gates. The second of these roads, the longest, is indeed a pleasant one. The woodland nooks on either hand, descend in cavernous green hollows, with shallow arbours

AMBRESBURY BANKS.

and arches, with ferns and grasses, flowers and flowering bushes, the leafy over-shadowing boughs, and the flickering sun-rays playing about, now here, now there, in circular spots of brilliant light, showing, as they fall upon the white stems of the graceful birch-trees, like discs of burnished silver. The road winds on in billowy undulations, and in the hollows to left and right every now and then we see large pools of water overgrown with feather-topped reeds. At last, curving away on the right, the road carries us back into Epping *New Road*, at a point where, on the other side of the road, a stretch of the wild is called *Long Running*. This is one of the spots most in favour with "picnic parties," as the gipsies know well enough. Of this portion of the country William Howitt, who lived for years in its neighbourhood, wrote in his "Year-Book of the Country:" "We break the spell of town dreariness, and are once more in the woods. We take our first flight into the near Forest of Epping; we walk for miles in green glades and beneath the close covert of the green boughs of the hornbeam trees; we pass on and (it being Whitsuntide) wonder where are the people who in caravans have gaily driven from town to enjoy the Forest freshness. . . . With their looped-up curtains, their streaming ribands, their bright colours, on they go, in trains of ten or twenty filled with happy people. Sometimes whole troops of schoolboys or schoolgirls fill them, who sing all together as they go out of the great Babel into free nature. Sometimes they are servants, youths and maidens, who have subscribed their penny a week to the association to which they belong, for these rural excursions. Sometimes they are young people of another class, mixed with husbands and wives, and even little children. . . . They have music. It plays as they go, and they sing as they go; and when the music is not heard there is a merry clatter of voices, of laughter, and of jokes. What lords and princes are half so happy? Away they stream, van after van, with their sumpter waggon, well stored, trotting on behind. Behind them lies the great brick-and-mortar wilderness, with all its labours and cares; before them, for one long day, the wilderness of green trees, straggling shrubs, and tall ferns, where the little brooks run in their half-concealed courses, and the thickets are wildest and most dense." Here and hereabout abound the most interesting birds, and in lower portions, where the soil is damp, the rarest insects and the most beautiful wild flowers. Every naturalist who lives near Epping knows what a happy hunting-ground it is for the plants and living creatures, which are spoken of in a later chapter. "The fringed buck-bean, the delicate bog pimpernel and marsh campanula, the insect-catching sundew, and the pretty spotted orchises," says Alfred R. Wallace, "with many other choice plants," may all be found in the wilds of dear old Epping.

Continuing south by the *New Road* (a foot-path runs parallel with the road in the wood, and is more pleasant walking), the "Wake Arms," a frequented forest tavern, is reached. Here five roads meet. One on the left, the *Old Road*, runs through the Forest, and out of it to *Loughton* (p. 91). Another, diverging angularly on the left, runs to *Jack's Hill* and *Theydon Bois* (p. 93). Two roads diverge on the right—one over *Woodridden Hill* (p. 83), the other to the "King's Oak" and *High Beach* (p. 50). The *New Road* continues straight on, and is the

most direct way to Chingford. A forest-path runs a few yards from the road along its right edge as far as the "Robin Hood" inn, and in summer avoids the heat and dust.

But should the day be quiet, and the dust not great, let us cry with the highwaymen of the spirited old song, "Hurrah! hurrah! for the road!" It is a delightful one, varying on either side as we advance, now rising into steep high banks, now diving into deep hollows, swelling into hills, sinking into valleys, the road winding as it falls and rises in long undulating waves. At frequent intervals, and on either hand, great pools of water reflect the rushes and flowering water-plants, the overhanging boughs and bushes, the deep blue of the sky, and the pearly delicacy of its lazily floating clouds. One of these, in what is called the Wake Valley, is still known as Dick Turpin's pond. Every now and then we are tempted to scramble down or up into the forest's domain, plunging through briar and bush, into great beds of giant ferns, stooping under low entangled branches, forcing our way through straggling bramble-bushes and thorny briars, winding in and out amidst oak and birch, beech and hornbeam and thorn, and a bewildering maze of whispering green leaves.

Perhaps we are nearing the end of our summer day's ramble somewhat wearily, thinking of rest and refreshment at Chingford. The twilight deepens about us. The birds are singing their lullaby to the day. We realize the safety and peace on this lonely road as we contrast it with the time, almost within living memory, when quiet pedestrians dreaded it. The pale grey earth-mists are stealing upward into the pensive tenderness of the quiet sky. Passing between us and those rich deep purples of remote distances, which rise above or peep through gaps in the blackened green of forest trees, it shows like the bloom upon a ripe plum. We see from the road woody valleys lost in misty shadow, with hill-sides and terraces of trees rising to catch the weak faintly-golden glory of the rising moon. Paler and more coldly blue the extreme distance peeps here and there through the purple, and blending with the sky is veiled from sight. The road winding upwards through the wood assumes an age-like grey. The ponds on either hand look up through the gathering dark with a cold, weird glare. The air is filled with low, confused music—the vesper hymn of the birds. The soft low cooing of the pigeons, and the low hum in which insects express their happiness and content, blend harmoniously. The tapping of the supper-seeking woodpecker sounds on our ears singularly distinct and clear. The whole Forest, spreading away from us on every side, is filled with the sounds of life; and the bats, diving and winding in eccentric flight, announce the approaching night.

Reaching the "Robin Hood," the road descends, skirts *Fairmead Bottom*, and presently shows us, on our right hand, the *Ranger's Road*, which takes us to hotel or train at Chingford.

CHINGFORD TO CHIGWELL.

BROADSTROOD LODGE.

By the *Green Ride*, *Ancient Earthworks*, *Little and Great Monk Woods*, *Hangboy Slade*, *Debden Green*, the *Roding Valley*, and *Chigwell Lane* (7 miles). This is the most pleasant and indirect way to Chigwell. It is not a true forest-walk, for Chigwell lies out of its domain; but what is not forest is fresh and breezy country. From Chingford the route is followed to *Broadstrood Lodge* on the *Old Road*, as described in "Chingford to Epping" (p. 61). Reaching that secluded cottage, where the year through a wood-fire glows and crackles on the kitchen-hearth, the *Green Ride* on the left is taken down into *Hangboy Slade*, the valley below. Just before reaching the bottom of the *Slade*, a track leaves the *Ride* on the right. This track, which runs along the valley, is taken. It winds slightly to the left through dense growths of bramble, arching overhead. At the end of the *Slade*, it mounts towards the right, and leads up and out of the Forest by a white house on a short road. This road descends to *Debden Green*, a small triangular grass patch, with a few houses. If the pedestrian, taking some other path, should not come out at the exact spot, he should inquire, and make for the *Green*. The road leaving it on the right is taken, and winds down by the grounds of *Debden Hall* on its left. It continues down a rustic oak-shaded lane, and bears, at the first branch, to the left, through rolling tree-fringed pastures. At its end stands the *Rectory*, by the green corner of the cross lanes—a white house, lying back among its dark firs and noisy rookery. Taking the lane on the left, it presently ascends, shaded by the tall trees of *Loughton Hall* on the right. Passing the pound, the lane descends into the pastoral *Roding Valley*, leaving

Chigwell Lane Railway Station on the left. Then it crosses the pretty narrow stream, and ascends the sloping side of the vale. At the top it skirts *Rolls Park* on the left, and commands views of the dark Forest ground spreading away on the right. Then, shaded by some high elms, it slopes down towards the timbered houses and ancient church of

CHIGWELL.

"Chigwell, my dear fellow, is the greatest place in the world. Name your day for going. Such a delicious old inn, facing the church—such a lovely ride—such forest scenery—such an out-of-the-way rural place—such a sexton! I say again, Name your day."

So wrote Dickens to Forster in 1841, while he was working at "Barnaby Rudge." The Chigwell that delighted Dickens is the Chigwell, very little changed, of to-day. The same church, the same inn, the same wooden cottages climbing the hill behind their small flowering front gardens, the same shady country road winding down towards London. As in Dickens' time, so now, there is no railway station at Chigwell village, which dozes undisturbed by any such innovation.

Much of the "local colour" of Chigwell tinges "Barnaby Rudge." The "King's Head," with its long, quaint, gabled front and swinging signboard, with its ample kitchen and its "best room," served for the "Maypole."

"In the year 1775," the story opens, "there stood upon the borders of Epping Forest, at a distance of about 12 miles from London, a house of public entertainment called the 'Maypole,' an old building, with more gable-ends than a lazy man would care to count on a sunny day; huge zig-zag chimneys, out of which it seemed as though even smoke could not choose but come in more than naturally fantastic shapes, imparted to it in its tortuous progress; and vast stables, gloomy, ruinous, and empty. The place was said to have been built in the days of King Henry VIII.; and there was a legend, not only that Queen Elizabeth had slept there one night while upon a hunting excursion, to wit in a certain oak-panelled room with a deep bay window, but that next morning, while standing on a mounting-block before the door with one foot in the stirrup, the virgin monarch had then and there boxed and cuffed an unlucky page for some neglect of duty. The 'Maypole' was really an old house—a very old house; perhaps as old as it claimed to be, and perhaps older, which will sometimes happen with houses of an uncertain age, as with ladies of a certain age. Its windows were old diamond-pane lattices; its floors were sunken and uneven; its ceilings blackened by the hand of Time, and heavy with massive beams. It was a hale and hearty age, though, still; and in the summer or autumn evenings, when the glow of the setting sun fell upon the oak and chestnut trees of the adjacent forest, the old house, partaking of its lustre, seemed their fit companion, and to have many good years of life in him yet."

One can repeople the place with Dickens' characters. There is the low room, with the small panes, against which John Willett flattened his nose, looking out on the dark night, as the story begins, when the village cronies, Tom Cobb, the general chandler and post-office keeper;

CHIGWELL CHURCH AND INN FROM HALL LANE.

long Phil Parkes, the ranger; and little Solomon Daisy, the parish clerk, were seated round the March fire. There is the "cosy bar," where Willett dozed, and where later the Gordon Rioters, on their way to the "Warren," left him bound and demented. Then there is the panelled "great room" upstairs, with its square casement, carved beams, and high chimney-piece, where Mr. Chester stayed, and met Mr. Geoffrey Haredale, of the "Warren;" and hard by there are the stables, where Hugh, and Barnaby, and the Raven slept among the straw.

Roaming through the old place, the incidents of "Barnaby Rudge" come back again, down to the time when the story closes, and old John Willett retires to a Chigwell cottage, and young Joe Willett and Dolly Varden settle down in life at the immortal "Maypole."

Facing the inn is the old *church*, with its low tower and wooden steeple, and its dark yew avenues leading from the road to the porch and chancel door through the old tombs. Here it was in the quiet graveyard, one remembers, that Barnaby and his mother, and of course the Raven, took their frugal dinner while waiting for the coach. "The raven was in a highly reflective state, walking up and down when he had dined with an air of elderly complacency, which was strongly suggestive of his having his hands under his coat-tails, and appearing to read the tombstones with a very critical taste. Sometimes after a long inspection of an epitaph, he would strop his beak upon the grave to which it referred, and cry in his hoarse tones, 'I'm a devil, I'm a devil, I'm a devil!' but whether he addressed his observations to any supposed person below, or merely threw them off as a general remark, is a matter of uncertainty."

On the floor of the chancel rests a brass of Archbishop Harsnett, founder of *Chigwell School*, close by the church. The bishop wears stole, alb, dalmatic, and cope, and holds a mitre and crozier. The inscription, translated, reads: "Here lieth Samuel Harsnett, formerly vicar of this church. First the unworthy Bishop of Chichester, then the more unworthy Bishop of Norwich, at last the very unworthy Archbishop of York, who died on the 25th day of May, in the year of our Lord 1631. Which very epitaph that most reverend prelate, out of his excessive humility, ordered by his will to be inscribed to his memory." This brass was formerly on the east wall, which accounts for its fine unworn surface. There are few finer brasses in more perfect preservation to be seen in England. The interior of the church is spoiled by unsightly galleries and pews, but these are to be cleared away. The one architectural feature of interest is the fine south Norman door, almost hidden by the modern wooden porch.

CHINGFORD TO CHIGWELL,

(*b*) *By Ranger's Road, Buckhurst Hill, the Roding Meadows, and Hall Lane.* (*About* 3½ *miles.*)

This is a more direct, but not a Forest route. A few minutes below the *Forest Hotel, Ranger's Road* crosses the *Ching Brook* by a small bridge. Immediately beyond the bridge, turn to the right by a path over the open Forest ground up to the "Warren Wood House" inn on the *New Road*. Facing the inn on the opposite side of

the road rises a patch of Forest ground. This is crossed by a worn path, and leads into the *Cricket Ground*, a cleared green space. Crossing it, the *Old Road* is reached. The "Roebuck," a gable-roofed inn, is seen lying back from it on the left. From the "Roebuck" a narrow path, by the flagstaff at its side, leads down to the right of *Buckhurst Hill Farm*, through the farmyard, and into a rough cart-track leading straight down the sloping fields beyond. It crosses the railway, passes down another field, and enters the green level pastures of the *Roding*. A grass track denotes the way to the *White Bridge* on the left, crossing the stream. Beyond the bridge the path ascends to the right past some clustering trees, ascends a pasture field, and enters the pleasant shaded *Hall Lane*, which slopes up to Chigwell by the side of the *Church*.

CHIGWELL TO CHINGFORD,

By Hall Lane, the Roding Valley, and Buckhurst Hill.

The previous route reversed is the shortest way to Chingford, or it may be varied slightly from the *White Bridge*, crossing the Roding. From the bridge two grass tracks diverge, the right leading to the "Roebuck" as described above, the left bearing over to the bottom of *Buckhurst Hill*, by the *Railway Station*. Thence the way lies up *Queen's Road* into the *Old Road* on the top of the hill, with the spire of *St. John's Church* seen on the right. Turning down on the left of a *pond* just before reaching the church, the *New Road* is entered. From this a turning on the left by the side of the "Reindeer" inn, enters the Forest. Bearing by a path leaving the road on the right over some open pasture, the *Ching Brook* is crossed by a plank bridge, and the *Oak Grove* is entered in front of the *Chingford Hotel*.

OLD HOUSES, CHIGWELL.

Another way from Buckhurst Hill *Railway Station*, and a more pleasant one, is through *Lord's Bushes*, an isolated piece of Forest. The way lies past the station along the bottom of the hill till *Lord's Bushes* are reached. Thence the way lies up through them to the top of the hill, where the *New Road* is entered, and kept to the right till the "Reindeer" inn, mentioned above, is reached.

CHINGFORD TO WALTHAM ABBEY,

(*a*) *By the Green Ride, Fairmead, Honey Lane Plain, Comical Corner, Woodridden Hill, and St. Thomas's Quarters.*

This is a route rarely or never taken to Waltham, and, from beyond High Beach, covers a quarter of the Forest little frequented. Five miles of the walk is through forest, and the road is entered only, and for a minute, at High Beach.

Any of the routes to *High Beach* (pp. 50–57) may be taken as far as the "King's Oak" inn.

The road past the "King's Oak" is continued for a few minutes, till a second sloping road enters it on the left. Just beyond where these two roads meet, a broad track is seen sloping down towards the left into the wood. It descends (due north), and skirts the bottom through a thinned wood of pollards, and comes out on a sloping road, *Gravel Hill*, running down to an angular edge of the Forest, called *Comical Corner*. Proceeding down this road for five minutes, the *Rifle Butts* are seen on the right sloping up into the wood. Walking up the Butts and past the targets on the left, a path rises beyond to a flagstaff and danger-board on a raised bank. A track is seen through the brake about ten yards before reaching them, bearing to the left (north). It passes into the wood, and skirts the brow of the sloping ground, commanding far views of the *Lea Valley*. It broadens into a cleared "Ride," called the *Verderer's Path*. Shaded by some unlopped oak and beech, it opens here and there into a small, open, circular knoll on the hill ridge, with some fresh and fair view of the broad green vale below, seen away to the low far hills on the horizon. At evening the windings of the Lea are traced by the silvery track of rising mist low along the valley. At the second of these circular clearings, the path makes a broad bend to the right, and a few yards further on reaches a third, a veritable paradise for picnics. Fringed round with green and shaded by an ancient holly, its open side, overlooking the sunny valley, slopes steeply down to a small path just below in the wood. Here a cool spring trickles from a cavernous opening in the hillside, and forms a small clear pool half hidden by some smooth tree-trunks thrown across it. Just beyond this spot, the *Path* enters and ends in a winding road. Standing here, the pedestrian has a choice of routes to *Waltham Abbey*. The nearest is by taking this road to the left, descending *Woodridden Hill* to the "Volunteer" inn near the *Rifle Butts*. *Honey Lane*, by the inn on the right, leads past the "Green Man" inn direct to Waltham.

The longer and more pleasant way is to turn to the right instead of to the left from where the *Verderer's Path* enters the road. In a few minutes some *keepers' cottages* are seen among the trees on the left. Just this side of them, a broad green track enters the wood. This is a

new and little frequented *Ride*, passing north-east through the low woods, and across the brooks to *St. Thomas's Quarters*. The *Ride*, half a mile on, crosses a road by the side of a railed *pond*, continues on the left of the pond, bearing a little more east than north, and comes out into the Epping *New Road*. At this point a sign-post indicates a branch road, leaving the *New Road* on the left to *Copt Hall* and *Waltham Abbey*. Just beyond the sign-post on the opposite side of the *New Road*, are seen the fringed earthworks of *Ambresbury Banks* (p. 68). Taking the road to Waltham, it skirts the *Warren Wood*, and passes *Copt Hall* lodges on the right, descends to *Copt Hall Green* (p. 73), bears along its left edge to *Sergeant's Green*, and thence past *Pickhall Farm*, bears to the left and continues by *Paternoster Hill* to the "Green Man," and straight into Waltham.

WALTHAM ABBEY.

Waltham wears an air of cheerful age in keeping with its ancient pedigree. Its ample inns suggest a more substantial welcome than a closer acquaintance justifies, for except perhaps at the "New Inn" the traveller finds poor provision wherewith he may "take his ease."

Lying low in the vale, the quiet old town straggles over the pasture-grounds watered by some half-dozen arms of the Lea, which break it up into as many islets as a Dutch village. The ground it occupies must have been near the memorable spot where the Danes came to grief, when Great Alfred the King diverted from beneath the keels of their long black

SPRING ON WOODRIDDEN HILL.

vessels the waters of the river, and left them high and dry in a wilderness of marsh and forest. The few scattered huts and sheds around the great barn-like Hall of the township's founder, arose when that mighty warrior, King Canute's standard-bearer, named Tovey le Prude (the Proud), settled here for the convenience of hunting with his thirty-six bold Freemen and their more or less numerous serfs or slaves. Through many a summer day the baying of their hounds and the braying of their horns caught the forest echoes as they rode out from the Wealdham, or wood-home, to chase

Heorte and hynde, doe and bocke.

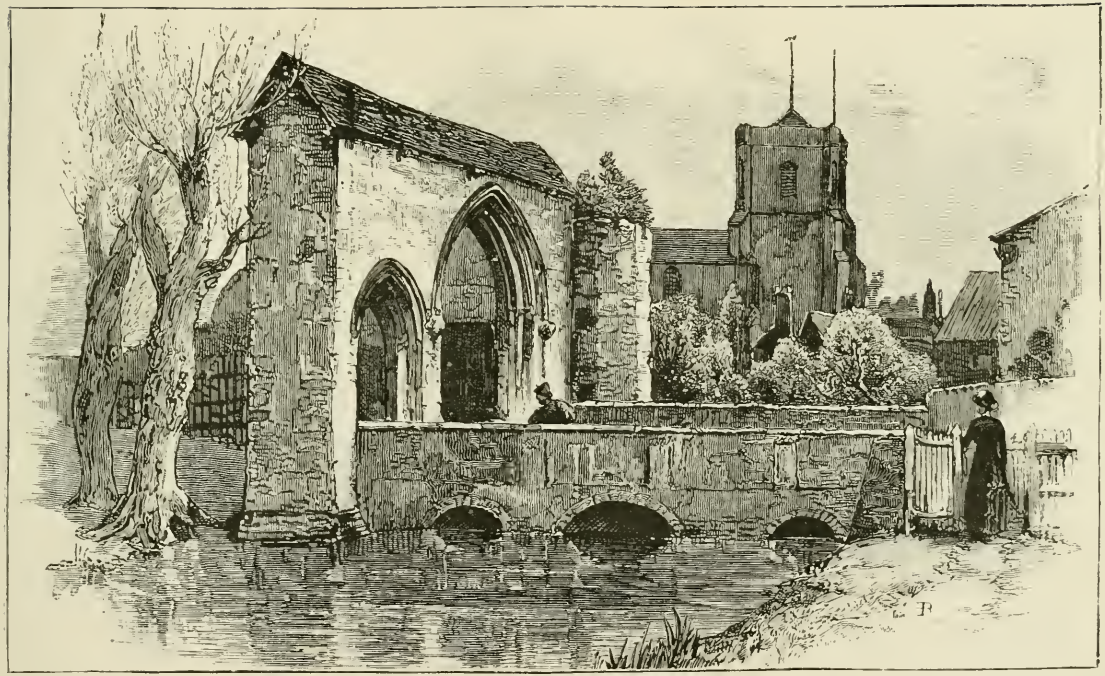
Here in course of time, when the Freemen and serfs had multiplied, when fields and pasture-lands had been created where before only sunless thickets were, Tovey erected his church and founded a small religious house with two attendant priests, who ministered to the spiritual wants of the Wealdham and tended the poor. So the little town grew. And when its new owner, that most pious and monklike of Anglo-Saxon kings, Edward the Confessor, reigned—Tovey's son having wasted his portion in riotous living—the King-Confessor erected and endowed in the Wealdham a monastery which rapidly spread its fame through all the Essex wilds and many a mile beyond. Earl Harold, lord of numerous farms and manors in the Great Forest, hunted and made merry here before the cares of a kingdom rested upon his stalwart shoulders. Here, in the merry month of May, 1060, he founded the stately Abbey Church, in which, war-worn, troubled, and anxious, he afterwards prayed for victory, in England's name, before he fought his last heroic fight at Hastings. And here, if tradition be true, when the wailing winds of dying summer were heard in the wood, with solemn rites, in grief and bitterness, Githa, his weeping mother, buried his disfigured corpse, to rest century after century under a broken tomb, which stood no living man knows where, the mouldering stone and its pitiful inscription, *Hic jacet Harold infelix*, having long since disappeared. It was "Imperial Cæsar dead and turned to clay," once more. No man in all the land cared to preserve the tomb of Harold or its remembrance—in this land where the dust of Alfred the Great was carted away as rubbish without a protest! Conjecture suggests that the tomb of Harold was, probably, about 120 feet from the east end of the old church, which now partially covers the site of its larger and more ancient predecessor. To Waltham Abbey Church, Maud, Henry I.'s pious queen, used to go every day in Lent-time, when cold March winds were blowing, barefooted, wearing a garment of hair, there to bestow alms bountifully, and humbly wash the feet of the poor.

Waltham Abbey flourished in state and opulence nearly five hundred years before the last representative of its old mitred abbots, Robert Fuller, gave up all that was left of its once proud possessions to his religious majesty Henry VIII., and retired to a quiet secluded home in the heart of the woodland, Copt Hall. The great abbey's career had not been all smoothness. William, the Norman Conqueror, dealt harshly with it, carrying away its precious chalices and jewelled robes. The second Harry dissolved the Foundation, on the ground that its canons had grown wasteful and wicked, robbing the poor to spend the money in feasting, wickedness, and riotous

jollity. The Freemen of the Forest quarrelled with it about their rights. But its prosperity and greatness suffered no permanent interruption until the Dissolution laid greedy hands upon its then enormous yearly revenue of £900 3s. 4d., and its site with all its rich lands and many of its manors were bestowed upon Henry's confidant, Sir Anthony Denny, who died in the reign of Edward VI. His Protestant widow, Joan, lived to see the saints of the Reformation suffer martyrdom in their turn. She was, as Fuller tells us, "a lady of great beauty and parts," who, in 1546, secretly and daringly sent eight shillings to assist that poor lady, Anne Aschot, she who was so racked and tortured in the Tower, and was carried in a chair to be burnt at Smithfield. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, Sir Edward Denny erected his noble mansion on ground belonging to the old abbey, and called it Abbey House. It was entered from the Romeland over the Abbey Bridge, where formerly was a fine avenue of sycamore trees, long ago cut down. The house was pulled down in 1770. A market garden now occupies its site—the bodies of dead worthies converted into dust, and developed into cabbages for poor men's eating. To Sir Edward Denny's gardener we owe the discovery of what, perhaps, was Harold's forgotten grave. The gardener, the minister, and Sir Edward's bailiff or steward saw the coffin opened, and looked upon, if such they were, the grand old Anglo-Saxon's bones. They wondered to find only the bones without a particle of dust, and these when disturbed by their touch also became dust.

From the *Market Place*, a quaint corner of ancient Waltham, with its old timber and plaster and brick houses, high-roofed and gabled, and its every other house an inn—an arched way leads through the long, red-roofed "Harp" into the green Abbey yard.

The remaining walls of the *Abbey of the Holy Cross*, of mixed stone and flint and brick, are rich in ancient colours delightful to the artist's or the antiquarian's eye. The fourteenth century *Lady Chapel*, built out from the nave, stands with its pointed arches and light and graceful tracery in sharp contrast against the massive and severe Norman nave, which ends in a squat and ugly sixteenth-century embattled tower. The nave is the only remaining portion of the Norman Abbey Chapel, and probably no stone stands of the original chapel founded by Harold. The transepts and choir, which extended far beyond where the Lady Chapel stands, and the church now ends, were demolished at the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1668 the Lord Chamberlain reported to that monarch of blessed memory, Charles II., that "the beautiful structure is become so ruinous that if not speedily repaired it will fall to the ground." Patched in succeeding centuries, it was not till 1859 that the great restoration, under Mr. Burges, was commenced. The mutilated interior, reduced as it is of the transepts and choir, remains a noble fragment of the splendid Abbey. The Norman nave retains its six massive alternate plain and carved columns on each side, spanned by the soaring arches of the triforium, and lighted by the high clerestory windows. The round Norman arch is conspicuous throughout, save at the west end, where some 'Early English' vandals have cut through arch and column, and made them pointed. The east wall, with its circular and pointed windows, and florid Gothic columns, which accords badly, as some think, with the simple dignity of the Nor-



ABBEY-GATE, WALTHAM.

man nave, is the work of the late restoration. The very beautiful carved and coloured reredos below the rich glass lighting this wall belongs to the same restoration. The great Norman arch spanning it marks where the east end of the nave ended, and the transepts and choir began.

The flat decorated ceiling is a replica of the cathedral ceiling at Peterborough, the only remaining example of the kind; the panels, representing the "Economy of the World," the "Four Elements," the "Past and Future," the "Signs of the Zodiac," and the "Labours of the Months," were painted by Mr. Poynter.

A few poor brasses remain upon the walls, and the only tombs of interest stand in the south-east corner, between the present choir and the Lady Chapel. Here rest in sculptured stone the carved recumbent figures of Sir Edward Denny and Margaret, his lady. They lie—the armoured knight, of whom it is here written, 'his tongue would never flatter,' and 'his heart could never yield,' and the wife wearing ruff and veil—beneath a canopy representing "Night," the long, last night of death. Beside the tomb rests another in alabaster, of Lady Greville, of Harold's Park, who died in 1560.

On the north side of the choir stands the remaining portion of the ancient rood-screen in carved oak. A very striking view of the sombre and massive nave is obtained from the Lady Chapel, which looks down from its raised floor into the church through one broad arch. This added chapel is interesting for its rich Early English tracery and carving, and for the fading traces of fresco-painting on its walls. Below it is the crypt, with a fine groined roof, ruined by the bricked-up parts, which mar its proportions.

Leaving the church, and turning to the right beyond the tower, we reach the old penned *Cattle Market*, bordered by small old houses. From its right corner the narrow Abbey stream is reached, spanned by a low brick bridge to the *Abbey Gate* on its edge. Traces of the wall which flanked it are seen on the river-edge, looking towards the old dark, timbered *Abbey Mill* built over the stream. Between the gate and mill, in the once Abbey grounds, stands the quiet vicarage, half hidden by its small pleasant orchard. Some five minutes' walk along the stream by the meadows beyond the gate, a low, arched ruined *bridge* of stone is reached, grass-covered, and without sides or parapet, and quietly crumbling to decay. It has one or two old drooping trees, and its own sharp shadow in the clear water to keep it company. It is a pleasant simple "bit" for the sketcher in water-colours. Returning to the gate, the path through which (part of the massive wall with its great bricks is on its right) leads into a Farm occupying this part of the Abbey grounds: permission obtained at the farmhouse, it is possible to see the small, curious groined building standing in the present orchard, and now a dark chamber devoted to the forcing of early rhubarb and the mysteries of mushroom-culture. From time to time a number of antiquities have been found in the grounds about the Abbey, earthenware, coins, lamps, seals, jewelry, weapons and keys.

Beyond the *Railway Station*, some half hour's walk from the Abbey, stands *Waltham Cross*, one of those erected by Edward I., greatest of our Plantagenet monarchs, to commemorate his love and grief for dead Queen Eleanor, his fond and faithful wife. Midway on the road is the entrance to the *Royal Gunpowder Factory*,

to which visitors are usually admitted on Monday and Thursday. The powder-mills extend along the river banks, and are screened by close lines of willows and poplars. There are many pleasant wanderings hereabout, one by road over the shady Hertfordshire hills or by river-bank to *Cheshunt*, 3 miles distant, and *Broxbourne*, 6 miles. *Harold's Park*, *Galley Hill*, and *Galley Wood* are all close by, and 2 or 3 miles beyond is *Warlies*, the seat of the Buxtons.

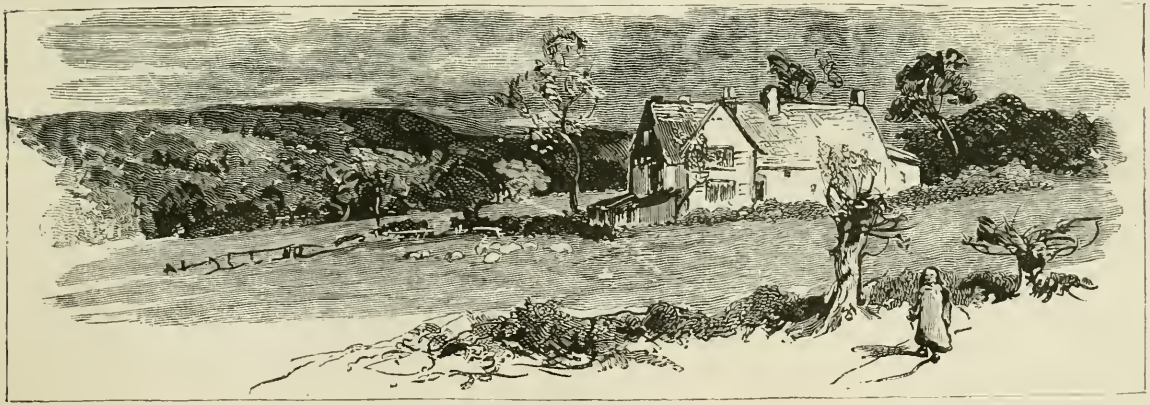
WALTHAM TO CHINGFORD.

The pedestrian returning to Chingford has a choice of "direct" routes, either through or skirting the Forest. Taking the road on the right from the "New Inn," the way lies down past the *Cemetery*, along the *Sewardstone Road* to *Avey Lane* on the left, which leads up to *High Beach*, whence the *Fairmead Road* is the nearest way to Chingford. The other route is by continuing along the *Sewardstone Road* past Avey Lane until *Mott Street*, on the left, is reached and taken. The *Green Lane* leaving it on the right leads to *Sewardstone Green*, from which the road on the left leads into the Forest by the "Woodman" inn, and thence by the *Bury Path* to Chingford. If, instead of leaving Sewardstone Green by the Green Lane the next turning beyond it on the right is taken, *Leppit's Hill* is reached, and the way then lies down by the old timbered "Owl" inn into the Forest, near *Fairmead Bottom*. Keeping to the right edge of the Forest, or bearing slightly to the left, *Bury Path* is reached, leading into Chingford.

CHINGFORD TO LOUGHTON AND THEYDON BOIS.

A pleasant Forest way is by the *Green Ride* to *Fairmead Lodge* (p. 57), and bearing through the beech wood to the right, just beyond the Lodge, to the "Robin Hood." *Earl's Path*, on the right of the "Robin Hood." leads straight down into *Loughton*, not far from the *Railway Station*.

Loughton itself is a straggling, elongated village, cropping up in patches up hill and down dale for nearly two miles along the road which leads to Epping. Harold the king was once its lord of the manor, and by him it was piously bestowed, with sixteen other manors or lordships, upon the monks of Waltham, who held it until the

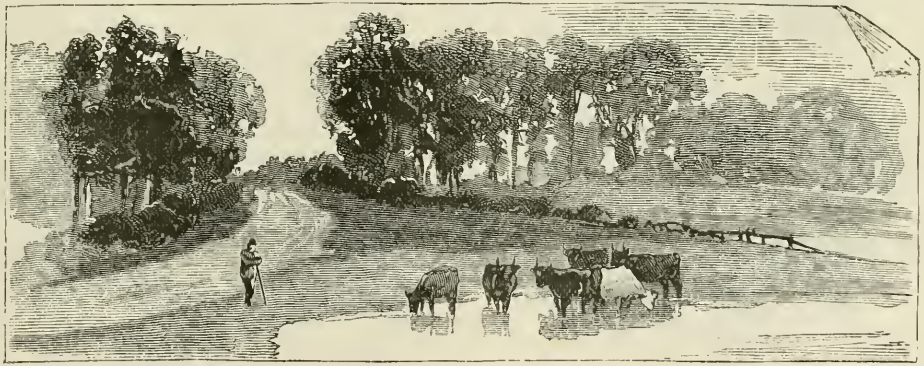


YORK HILL, LOUGHTON.

Reformation swept it and many other fat lands of the ancient Abbey into royal possession. Then Sir Thomas Dacy held its lordship, then Queen Mary, and from her it passed in Elizabeth's day to the Stonards, who were predecessors of the Durants of Enfield, who were succeeded by the Nassau Earls of Rocheford and others. The new parish church, St. John's, is a landmark standing high at the north-east corner of the village.

On leaving Loughton we walk through the village to *Staples Pond*, and there turning to the right from *Earl's Path*, ascend by the *Staples Road*, leaving behind us the National Schools, little houses and old cottages with smiling gardens all aglow in rich colour, and with woodland rising in rugged heights upon our left. We pass on, winding higher and higher, getting peeps of distant scenery on our left. We toil up *Pump Hill*, and appropriately enough find several Jills and Jacks descending with pails of water, each with one in either hand, kept apart by the aid of a wooden hoop. The "Gardener's Arms" is passed on the right, and we turn into a winding rustic lane on our left, which carries us up to *Ash Green*, beyond a very quaint, ancient-looking black and red cottage. There is a fine view over the hills and hollows and distant trees on our right, and on our left is the thick forest. Ash Green and its cottages left behind, the road dips abruptly down into the wood and rises as steeply. Splendid views over the woods are now obtained in quick succession. Presently we see, beyond *Baldwin's Hill*, views full of varied and charming scenery, long sweeping ascents and downward curves, here clothed with foliage, there open to the view, with the blossoming boughs, and tall flowering plants growing amidst grasses, ferns, and bramble-bushes. From the "Forester's Arms," soon reached, on the right, we look down into great ponds, which might easily be converted into spacious lakes (some day they probably will), and far away over the Forest. Most people agree in asserting that St. Paul's is visible from here, as indeed it is—with a glass. We see from here the "King's Oak" at High Beach, with the church close by it; the London and Epping New Road, the "Chingford Hotel" to the left; and when the day is clear, as far as Sevenoaks in Kent is visible. Monk's Wood is down below us on the right, in which direction we see figures on the Green Ride to Chingford. On we pass by *Baldwin's Hill* and the *Ponds*, and close by we quit the road we have so far kept, and wander away into the wood, wondering at the height and tree-like forms of the great glossy hollies, revelling in blossoming gorse and dark-hued furze, and feeling the weird influence and graveyard ghostliness of the irregular white-lichened and pale-grey tree-trunks rising about us in irregular rows and sombre groups. The old Monk's Wood is on our left, rustling sadly in the thick brown piles of last year's green summer leaves. Great heaps and banks of ferns hide us from view as we wind between them and presently regain the *Old Road*, which if pursued would take us to the "Wake Arms." But we only cross it close by where *Broadstrood Lodge* (the keeper's house) is seen, and hark back again into the wilds by the *Green Ride* (p. 66), which carries us steeply down into the deep hollow of *Hangboy Slade*, at the bottom of which runs with musical splash, ripple and drip, with deviously wandering and winding ways, a little brook, which now

flashes in a stray gleam of sunlight, and is now mysteriously lost in cavernous black hollows beneath the thick and ragged undergrowth. Following the right, we quit the wood and reach *Debden Green*, where stands Debden Hall, out, of course, of the direct way to our destination, but that is nothing to the pleasure-seeker. From here we simply pursue the road, which is a very pleasant one, passing on our left *Gaunt Wood*, with *Birch Wood* behind it, and *Redoak* wood beyond it up to *Theydon Green*, with its fine avenue and broad breezy space, dotted round with lofty trees and lowly houses. As we emerge into the Theydon Road, the "Queen Victoria" sign faces us, and a little to the right, beyond a majestic group of trees, we see the "Assembly Rooms," a small low, old-fashioned inn. The loftiest part of Theydon is called *The Mount*. This is farther on, three miles from *Epping*. Beyond it is *Theydon Gernon*, which is one mile from Epping; and here in Theydon Bois—Bois meaning woody—we touch the most southerly part of the Forest district. From here we may return to Debden Green, which is by the road about a mile away; and then crossing the Forest, where a notice-board informs us that we may do so, cross an open glade, ascend a fern-clad hill, commanding a fine view over the valley of the Thames, with Kent in the extreme distance, and pursuing one of the old and sunken roads, reach the top of *Copley Plain*, and so descend into *Hangboy Slade*, whence the *Epping Road* can soon be reached, and the way back pursued to Chingford.



LOUGHTON PONDS.

FAUNA AND FLORA OF THE FOREST.

BIRDS.

As Epping is the one Forest belonging to "the people," so probably it is the only one known to man whose furred and feathered things scorn gun or snare, and smile securely at the sportsman. Great and small, they enjoy the special protection of Parliament, and are guarded with a jealous eye by the City of London.

Under the care of Crown and Corporation they have the Duke of Connaught for their Ranger, the prerogative of whose office it is, or was, to keep all "wild beasts" within the Forest borders.

It is true that Forest frequenters during the past spring were startled by the popping of guns, suggesting a return of the good old days of wholesale slaughter. But it was merely the "thinning" of the JAYS to order. As two hundred or more of these doomed birds suffered the extreme penalty of Forest law, the jay family, if not exterminated, may be expected to behave more in harmony with official views of fowl life in future.

So favoured is the district by the feathered tribe, that the cannibal jay, sipping eggs from every opening nest, grew as sleek as he is sly. His wary eye twinkled at enticing traps set for his convenient capture. His rasping cry went up from every thicket, and Forest ramblers, remembering the crested bird which dodged on

in front of them, inquisitive and cautious, are sorry for his fall. Perhaps it is one of the penalties of town life that the Londoner regards the shooting of all birds, not made by nature for bread-sauce, as a sin. He does not discriminate, but extends a general sympathy to feathered things, drawing the line broadly at his neighbour's henroost and feather dusters.

What the Conservators will say to the culpable CUCKOO, as his family increases and his burgling ways call for repressive legislation, it is premature to guess. The cuckoo cannot be cured; but he cannot be exterminated, for to think of him as we think of the dodo, and with the bird's cry haunting hourly our Swiss clocks, is intolerable. At the worst the cuckoo must be outlawed in company with the more guilty SPARROW-HAWK, and spend his vagabond summer-days elsewhere.

Most of the Forest birds abide in pleasant harmony. The THRUSH, the BLACKBIRD, the LARK, the LINNET and the ROBIN are the leaders of the Forest choir. Their matin and vesper song is one of the sweet features of this London woodland. The entire finch family—CHAFFINCH, BULLFINCH, GOLDFINCH, GREENFINCH, even the shy HAWFINCH, lend their aid. Soon after daybreak, when few beyond the early worm, the keepers and the sun have risen, the song begins. It is all the soloists singing at once their favourite airs. While the woods thrill with the sound, the KESTREL is flying low along the glades after his morning mouse. The abounding WAGTAIL and the rare KINGFISHER are busy by the brooks and the rushy ponds. The WOODPECKER—that postman of the woods—is busily "tapping the hollow beech tree." The ROOKS are taking their early constitutional high above from their ancient colonies on the Forest border. The SWALLOW, too, and the REDSTART, the PIPIT and the WHITETHROAT, the YELLOWHAMMER and the WREN, are on the wing. The TAWNY OWL is sleeping in Monk Beech-woods, and the WOODPIGEON and the TURTLEDOVE are cooing in near Theydon thickets, where the resentful TITMOUSE, on watch, gives noisy notice of intrusion. Throughout the Forest is the pervading sparrow—the London bred bird, conspicuous by his dinginess and impudence. Those who know the district best, say that he now flocks to the Forest during the summer months. Perhaps the wear and tear of town life begin to be felt even on the housetops.

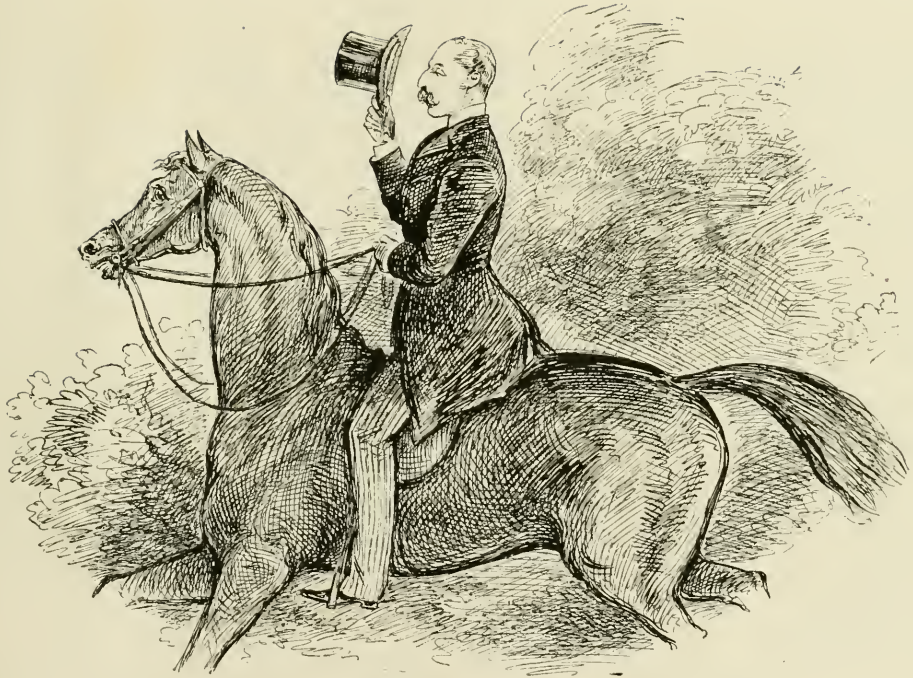
He comes here in his dingy, dusty dress, with his heavy thick-set hop, and his pert town ways. Nothing seems to surprise or disconcert him except the BATS. He takes to country life as a matter of course. To the morning and evening concert he contributes nothing but a jerky chirp, and he takes a mean advantage during the chorus of stealing away and foraging after the choicest worms and the tit-bits of the Forest birds' breakfast.

Other birds, some songless like the sparrow, haunt parts of the Forest south of Chingford, not embraced in this Handbook. Of these the most conspicuous are the HERONS at *Wanstead Park*.

For centuries this fragment of the great Essex forest owed its preservation to the wild animals which made it their home. "A forest," says an old authority, "differs from Park, Warren, and Chase, and is on purpose allotted for the Peaceable Abiding and Nourishment of the Beasts and Fowls thereto belonging." In ancient times wolves, bears, and boars were the thickets' denizens, and chief objects of the chase; in later times the stag, hind, and roebuck were favourite beasts of "venery;" and to them in more modern times succeeded the hare, and afterwards the fox, which had previously been classed with such inferior beasts of chase as the marten and the roe.

Samuel Lyson, a famous antiquary who flourished in the last century, writing of Waltham forest in his "Magna Britannia," describes it as "of large extent, full of game, and well stocked with deer, the fattest and the largest in the kingdom." In 1793 bucks and does were still numerous, if we may judge by the large number then annually killed for royal and privileged tables. But a few years later, mainly in consequence of the depredations of the "Waltham Blacks" (see page 45), an order was issued that "the stock of red and fallow deer being so low that they are likely to be extirpated, no more are to be taken for three years." By this means the stock was for a time increased once more, and in Mr. E. N. Buxton's "Epping Forest," recently issued, he quotes the letter of an old inhabitant who, writing of the year 1829, says:

"When a boy, my father took me for a treat to London. It was a fine summer morning. We started at four o'clock. I well remember the open plains bordering the forest swarmed with deer. I am sure there must have been hundreds in sight at one time." Mr. Buxton mentions another old inhabitant who remembered seeing the deer near Leytonstone, and adds: "From the encroachments on the area of the forest, the depredations of poachers, and from the sporting rights of the Crown having been allowed to fall into disuse, the number of the deer diminished greatly from the beginning of the century, until about the year 1860, when there were said to be under ten left alive." In 1863 Mr. Howard, giving evidence before a select committee of the House of Commons, spoke of somewhere about a dozen. But there was another cause for the scarcity of deer, which most writers on the subject have overlooked. Mr. Long Pole Wellesley had before this time appropriated without the shadow of a right some hundreds of goodly forest acres, and played "high jinks" from his residence in Wanstead Park, where he kept a pack of stag-hounds in grand style, gave great hunting-parties, and filled the merry green woods from dewy morn till twilight gloom with sounds of hounds and horns. His rollicking serving-men, in their high boots and smart Lincoln green coats, made merry at the inns, while their master was wasting his substance in reckless extravagance at the Hall. While hunting he would scatter sovereigns amongst the wildly delighted



H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT, RANGER.

and excited country people with prodigal liberality. But the end came quickly, and the man who ten years before had a rent-roll of £70,000 in Essex alone was obliged to escape in disguise from his creditors and fly the country. The old red-deer were caught and carted away to Windsor Park, until at last only one was left, a swift-footed, crafty old beast, which Tommy Rounding (a native of the Forest, and the prodigal's chief huntsman, who had managed to secure a few couples of the famous hounds) hunted and killed at West Ham, after a "run" that was long the fireside talk of the Forest and its environs. Tommy Rounding then became, in conjunction with his brother Richard, landlord of "The Horse and Groom" at Woodford Wells, still keeping his deer-hounds and pack of foxhounds, and still contriving to get a few days' occasional sport with them on his fine old hunter "Spankaway." For many years it was his pride to show admiring guests a handsome silver cup, which on festive occasions was filled and handed round, and on which was inscribed, "From Long Wellesley abroad to Tommy Rounding at home." Amongst those who were Tommy's most frequent guests were at one time Thomas Hood, the poet and humourist, and old George Cruikshank. The latter has preserved Tom's face and figure in a characteristic sketch, and the former has pithily described him in immortal verse as having

> "A snow-white head, a merry eye,
> A cheek of jolly blush;
> A claret tint laid on by health
> With Master Reynard's brush."

Every Sunday Tommy's house was full of London celebrities — actors, authors, journalists, and cockney sportsmen—but mostly on the grand day of the Old Epping Hunt, when he was indeed in all his glory. Pierce Egan says of Tom: "It was a fine treat to hear Tom Rounding in the field calling out: 'Hark forward! Look at Tyrant, Gladsome, and Governess; see, there they go! What a head they make altogether! Get forward, boys! They are laying at him as bitter as soot. Now, my boys, now for the brush!'" In Tom's merry time there were pony races at Woodford every Whitsuntide, and rare sports over which Tom and Dick gleefully presided.

The only wild FALLOW-DEER in England are those which are native to Epping Forest, although at one time they were abundant enough in many other places. They differ from the Park deer, and in these wilds they have wandered in great herds century after century, ever since the Romans first turned them loose here, as tradition tells. That any of the fine old breed now remain in the Forest is due, firstly, to the fostering care of the Rev. J. W. Maitland; and, secondly, to the watchful guardianship of the verderers. In colour they are uniformly of a dark brown, small in size, and with horns less branched than in other varieties. They are so shy that it is not always easy to obtain a sight of them; but of late, it is said, they are growing bolder. Mr. Buxton says: "So well aware are they when they are concealed, that they will often allow one to pass within a few feet of their hiding-place without stirring. . . . There are always plenty within a mile radius of the 'Wake Arms,' and the tracks of some of the larger bucks can generally be found within a short distance of Chingford Station. South of that point they do not often go."

RED-DEER, which are larger, bolder, and more strikingly handsome animals, were simply those spoken of as having become extinct in the beginning of the present century. They were then hunted, and kept impounded for that purpose, but never hunted to the death. Now, thanks to royal generosity, red-deer of the old Epping breed are once more visible in their ancient breeding wilds, and may be occasionally met with between Chingford and Epping.

The old English ROE-DEER, which an old authority already quoted states was extinct in England before the present century commenced, and then only to be found in Scotland, are the smallest of British deer. These were recently re-introduced to the Forest by Mr. Buxton, with the active co-operation of two Dorsetshire gentlemen, from the Vale of Blackmoor, no longer ago than last year. They are of the old breed, which has never been extinct in the wooded combes of that part of Dorsetshire. These are in colour a light reddish brown, and are generally seen, not in herds, but in pairs.

The other animals found wild in the Forest are HARES RABBITS, and FOXES (which are mostly found in Monk Wood), badgers perhaps, pole-cats probably, martens rarely; the fierce and sanguinary STOATS; WEASELS in greater abundance, and squirrels occasionally. HEDGEHOGS and SHREWS are also seen, snakes sometimes, slow-worms more frequently, and now and then a viper. Avoid the latter, and it will avoid you; attack it, and it will show fight, and perhaps give you cause for repentance.

INSECTS, MOTHS, AND BUTTERFLIES.

THE Forest is as popular a hunting-ground for the entomologist as it is for the botanist and ornithologist. No less than thirty different varieties of dragon-flies have been caught in it; and a vast number of others, varying in size, appearance, and habits, make it their busy haunt after their "lazy sabbath of a half-year's sleep."

A writer in the *Times*, speaking of the destructive ravages of the *Tortrix viridana*, which so frequently abounds in the Forest during the month of May, says: "In walking through Epping Forest I noticed that every tap on an oak branch caused a cloud of these insects to fly out. The moth when expanded is something under one inch across the wings, the upper pair of which are of a pure green colour." In addition to a large variety of insects found in the Forest, many of which are extremely rare, not less than sixty out of the seventy or eighty known varieties of butterflies are also to be found in it. Amongst them are: (1) The Camberwell Beauty (*Vanessa antiopa*); (2) the Brown Hairstreak (*Thecla betulæ*); (3) the Brindled White Spot (*Tephrosia extersaria*); (4) the Square Spot (*Tephrosia consonaria*); (5) the Cinnabar (*Euchelia jacobææ*); (6) the Ruby Tiger (*Arctia fuliginosa*); (7) the Lunar Thorn (*Selenia lunaria*); (8) the Silver-spangled Blue (*Lycæna ægon*); (9) the Scarce Footman (*Lithosia complana*); (10) the Four-spotted Footman (*Lithosia quadra*); (11) the Clouded Buff (*Euthemonia russula*); (12) the December Moth (*Pœcilocampa populi*);

(13) the Great Oak Beauty (*Boarmia roboraria*); (14) the Square Spot (*Tephrosia consonaria*); (15) the Lobster Moth (*Stauropus fagi*); (16) the Triangle (*Limacodes asellus*); (17) the Barred Umber (*Numeria pulveraria*); (18) the Anther Moth (*Charœas graminis*), and many others, each of which has a favourite resort; some preferring spots where oaks abound, others beeches; some revelling in a moist locality, others in a dry one. The bramble blossoms attract some, the hornbeam others, and some haunt the whitethorns. Some are found where the thistles grow most thickly; others where rushes abound; and so on.

DEBDEN SLADE, FROM THE ANCIENT EARTHWORKS.

A BEECH TRUNK IN HIGHBEACH WOOD.

IN these five thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight acres of ancient waste and woodland we have trees of comparatively few varieties. Noble willows grow on its western boundary, rising from a stiff clay soil, and attaining handsome proportions. In the northern and more picturesque parts between Queen Elizabeth's Lodge and Epping, are Oak, Hornbeam, Blackthorn, Beech, and Hawthorn, with, in much fewer numbers, Crab, Elm, Ash, an occasional Maple, a steadily increasing number of Birch trees, and some few others, with a luxuriant undergrowth of hollies, brambles, ferns, and struggling, straggling shoots and seedlings.

The vigorous policy of clearing out the close Forest undergrowth adopted by the authorities, especially noticeable last autumn and winter in the thousands of bundles of cut bough and bramble lying over the Forest stacked for carting, is probably regarded with something like horror by the butterfly, insect, and wild-flower hunters of Epping.

Mr. Buxton, one of the verderers, with a lifelong acquaintance of the Forest, anticipates objections to the thinning of the pollard trees—some thousands of which have been cut down—in his recent valuable and sympathetic book. He does not refer to the wholesale clearing and trimming of the undergrowth which in the course of time, objectors to the system are never tired of declaring, will convert the Forest into a park. There is, however, something explanatory to be said.

So much good work has gone hand in hand with this "clearing," in the way of opening up the once bog-like bottoms by ditch and draining, and of making the pedestrian's paths straight by the cool cleared green "Rides," that the average visitor would be churlish indeed who demurred at the general "excellent way" of the Forest authorities. But one may hope that for every pollard cut

BEDFORD'S OAK, CHINGFORD GREEN RIDE.

down in the thickets a sapling will be planted in the open Forest tracts.

Oaks.—The oaks are of a kind which the botanist calls *Quercus sessiliflora*. Its fruit is produced close to the stalk, and the leaves are smaller than most other varieties. Generations of amateur woodcutters have pollarded most of them out of all semblance to the grandeur and majesty with which ancient oaks are usually associated; but some fine ones have been preserved. Of these the largest stands by Fairmead Lodge, with a bole twenty-two feet in circumference. Another fine tree is that known as Bedford's Oak (p. 103). In April its amber and golden buds stud the branches with jewel-like beauty, and with leisurely slowness blossom, just as the young leaflets are beginning to expand. In October its acorns appear in richly embossed cups, to be carried away, and planted where some will have a chance to grow, by strong winds and the active squirrels. On some of the old oaks tufts of fern prettily spangled with gold will be seen growing. It is said that the ordinary duration of the oak is nine hundred years, and many in the Forest are at least as old. Insects abound in the oak. "Those lovely creatures, the butterflies of various kinds, beetles, and a multitude of little creeping things," of which only the botanist knows how many, flock to it, abide in, or lodge upon it.

Beech.—The finest specimens of this stately tree must be sought on the highest ground where the soil is lightest and driest. There are some noble groves near High Beach, in the Monk Woods, and in the Green Ride of Epping Thicks. Under the beech boughs the walks are dry, and in summer-time pleasantly cool. Its branches, sweeping upward to great heights, form stately arches, and the smooth grey bark and divisions of its bole often make it look very like a cluster of stone pillars such as we see in Gothic architecture. In autumn its foliage assumes the rich hues of amber, gold, and copper, and is strikingly beautiful, especially at sunset; and then, too, begins the formation of those spike-like buds which the spring merely develops into more visible forms, and so death and vitality go hand in hand. The beech is not in favour with the insects, nor will the grass spring up in its shade; but mosses and fungi love to overspread its roots and climb its mighty boles. One of the most beautiful aspects of the tree is seen when the sun shines through its leaves just after a shower.

Hornbeams, which are sufficiently like beeches to be mistaken for them, abound in Epping. No matter what the soil, wet or dry, light or heavy, these hardy members of the sylvan fraternity flourish under the most unpromising circumstances, and defy the roughest ill-treatment to weaken their vigour or check their obstinately persevering growth. The deer are particularly fond of their early-springing leaves, and this may account for such an abundance of these trees in a royal forest wherein all things once played a subordinate and ministering part to the lordly beasts. The branches of hornbeams have a singular tendency to rejoin and blend with the parent stem, and this will be often noticed in the course of one's forest rambles.

Birch.—The graceful sway and delicate curves of the lady Birch (*Betula alba*) afford striking contrasts of form and character, and the rich abundance of its winged and wind-borne seeds give promise that in the future this pretty tree, with its silvery moss-ringed stem, will, wherever the soil is dry enough and open for their recep-

tion, make many a pleasant grove, with flickering sun and shade. It is here a comparatively new-comer, but has propagated of late years with singular rapidity.

The HAWTHORN, which delights the eye, in the "merry month of May," with its rich luxuriance of white blossoms, has many an ancient and rugged-looking specimen in all parts of the Forest. BLACKTHORNS, which blossom earlier, are also plentiful, and make the dense thickets impenetrable with their picturesque stems.

ALDER and the WILD CHERRY are also amongst the Forest's sylvan denizens.

In the future we shall doubtless have trees in much richer and more varied abundance; for great spaces of stolen land newly recovered (thanks and many thanks to the Corporation of the City) are to be planted with all possible speed. These young woods will, of course, give fresh variety to the scenery; but it is worth the consideration of those who have the planting and management whether they would not do well to introduce trees of foreign origin which are known to take root and flourish in such soil as the Forest possesses. As to the merely sentimental and fanciful objection urged against them because they are not now English—as many grand old trees now common in England once were not—is it worth the serious attention of either artistic or practical men? Imagine what a charm there would be in contrasting oak and beech with the neighbouring and more richly ornamental forms and colours of a wild American forest, with their rich undergrowth of flowers and blossoming plants. Mr. Alfred Wallace once pointed out that "Nearly all these American trees (such as sugar-maple, hickory, tulip, red-wood and the locust) could be raised from seed almost as cheaply as the very commonest kinds;" adding, as to the time of growth in such trees, "The Wellingtonia will reach twenty feet in ten years; the Douglas fir grows even more rapidly when young;" and pointing out how, at Dropmore, "the beautiful grass-green *Pinus insignis* reached the height of sixty-eight feet in thirty-four years. The coniferous trees of Western America might elsewhere be "planted in masses, groups, or belts, and with winding paths, broad glades, and occasional shrub-planted openings admitting free access to every part of it, would probably be even more attractive than a forest of Eastern America," which also, according to Mr. Wallace, should have its place in the new portions of Epping woodland. Eastern Europe and Western Asia also contain a large variety of trees, which might be naturalised here in Epping, and there is no reason why we should not have a Japanese forest side by side with the ancient woods of Essex. As an artist and a lover of forest rambles at home and abroad, the writer heartily commends the idea to those who are set in authority over London's Romance, the wilds of ancient Epping.

FLOWERS.

TO but name the flowering plants of Epping Forest would fill much space. Moreover, many of the kinds distinguished by botanists under some half-score or many more names have structural differences too slight or obscure to be recognised by the unlearned. Many are peculiarly fine; some are exceptionally rare. Ere spring has come, and before the earliest of the grasshoppers have awakened from their winter sleep, the Wild Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) begins to put forth leaves, and soon the

Chickweed (*Stella media*), with all its pleasant sisterhood —aquatic included—displays its transparent knotty stalks, erect, or creeping through the grass, and gives its tiny white light-reflecting flowers to shine through the green. Of the seed-pods of this plant, Gerard, the fine old herbalist, wrote: "The little birds in cages, especially linnets, are refreshed therewith when they loathe their meat, whereupon it is called by some '*Passerina*.'" But no less in favour with wild birds are its good brown seeds. The clustering flowers of the Common Water Dock lend the numerous ponds new beauty, and blend their showy forms with those of the Water Lilies and the flowering rushes, where, with "the blue above and the blue below," they revel in the forest's soft warm air and genial sunshine. The Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) blooms when March winds blow (its name denotes *primus*, or first), and its masses of pale yellow light up the woodland as with a foretaste of the summer's prime.

But the Primroses of Epping grow too near the homes of the London street-vendors to escape the spoilers, and therefore they "soon, ah! too soon," disappear from their native haunts. With tearful and smiling April's changeful skies of pearly grey and brilliant blue come the Oxslips and Bluebells and the tender white of the pretty Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), while

> "the titlark sweetly singing
> Tells of flowers and leaves again."

The White-blossomed Hawthorn (*Cratægus oxycantha* follows, with Daffodils and Forget-me-Nots, and the rich deep golden blossom of the Gorse. Then in quick succession follow quite a whole fairy host of woodland flowers, each at its appointed time. Daisies and Buttercups, Violets and Mallow, the various kinds of St. John's Wort, Wood-Sorrel, Wild Heath, and "the bonny, bonny broom," the Purple Clover, and the Crimson Vetch, the trailing Wild Strawberry, straggling Brambles, Sweetbrier, Ladies' Smock, Dog-rose, Nightshade, Heather and Fern, Wild Carrot and Parsley, Woodruff, the shade-loving Great Valerian, Coltsfoot and Golden-rod, Marigolds and Feverfew, Burdocks and Thistles, Dandelion and Hawkweeds, Harebell and Ling, Bindweeds, the Small Butterfly Orchis, the strange Grass of Parnassus, and the stately and showy Foxglove. There blooms the curious round-leaved Sun-dew, the Lesser Snapdragon, the Eyebright, the Water-Speedwell, and others of its ilk, the Wild Basil, the Yellow and Scarlet Pimpernels, the Iris Water Plantains, the flowering grasses and many others, including one of the least but most lovely, the Ivy-leaved Bell-flower (*Campanula hederacea*), with many another flowering plant, as the saying runs, "too numerous to mention." Wood-sorrel, which is said to be the true shamrock, also grows in the Forest, as do also both the British species of Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium*).

LICHENS AND MOSSES.

IN the grey and sober winter-time, when the woodland boughs are bare or rustling in their shrouds of dry brown shrivelled leaves, we have still many elements of beauty in the form of vigorously thriving plant-life. Not only does the glossy green holly abound in trees and bushes, but a variety of moisture-loving lichens and mosses flourish in their full luxuriance of form and colour. Here they gleam in silvery whiteness, there in deep golden radiance;

here in sombre blackness, sometimes in a rich variety of greens; and then again in blushes rosy red, now in orange and greenish-yellows, and now browns with a curious metallic lustre. They flourish on the beech-trees, and adorn the knarled, knotted, and twisted grey trunks of the old pollared oaks, clothe the dead and prostrate trees, and climb the living branches overhead, some in mat-like patches, some in ring-like bands, others in mounds, and some with tiny fern-like forms. With their upper surfaces in a constant state of reproduction, and their lower parts as constantly decaying, they give the soil that elastic peaty character which the Forest wanderer so often recognises beneath the feet. Here we find them amongst the heather, there amongst the grass (to which moss is a deadly and destructive foe), always most flourishing, hardy, and defiant of the season's vicissitudes where moisture is most found. They mitigate the severity of the summer heat to the roots they shield, being non-conductors, and moderate the winter's icy-coldness, have leafy stems and leaves that are narrow and simple in form. Their botanic characteristics are anthers without filaments. (The anther is that part which contains the fertilizing dust or pollen by which the seed-vessel is fructified, and filaments are those threads by which the anther is supported.) The male flower, that in which the anther is present, appears placed apart from the female on the same or distinct roots. The female flower is without the pistillum or central organ. It will be no uninteresting task to examine curiously the structure and loveliness of their stems, leaves, and minute sprays that radiate in every direction like the frost flowers of winter on our window-panes.

The following is a list of mosses to be found in Epping: (1) *Sphagnum acutifolium*, (2) *Sphagnum rubellum*, (3) *Hypnum ruscifolium*, (4) *Eurynchium striatum*, (5) *Dicranum heteromallum*, (6) *Bartramia fontana*, (7) *Bartramia pomiformis*, (8) *Dicranum scoparium*, (9) *Leucobryum glaucum*, (10) *Mnium hornum*, (11) *Mnium undulatum*, (12) *Mnium punctatum*, (13) *Ceratodon purpureus*, (14) *Funaria hygrometrica*, (15) *Bryum argenteum*, (16) *Philinotis fontana*, (17) *Physcomitrium pyriforme*, (18) *Aulacomnion palustre*, (19) *Aulacomnion undulatum*, (20) *Tetraphis pellucida*, (21) *Hypnum triquetrum*, and very many others which we have not space to enumerate.

FUNGI.

Fungi abounds in the Forest. Amongst them are the tall and slender Parasol Mushroom, with its blotched and scaly top growing amongst the gorse and fern, a kind which is sometimes cooked in oil, and eaten with salt and pepper, forming a pleasant dish. The deep yellow Chantarelle with its apricot odour should be sought under the beech-trees, and it also is good eating, being most esteemed in France, where it is a great luxury. But it must be well broiled, and should be steeped in milk some time before it is cooked. In Italy, also, it is in favour, dried. The Oyster Mushrooms and the warty Red-fleshed mushrooms are also often found in the Forest, the former abounding on the trunks of old elms. The Orange-milk Mushrooms found where fir-trees grow, and the dangerous Fiery-milk genus, in eating which the rabbits have delight, as have also the squirrels. The pale crimson-topped variety with yellow gills are edible,

as is not its poisonous relative, with the large scarlet, crimson, and purple top. Fungus of a sweet nutty flavour, known by the variety of tints it blends, and therefore called the Variable Mushroom, is excellent, and so is the *Russula*, and also the *Virescens*, although its rough patches of emerald green may cause it to be regarded with disfavour and suspicion. There is the acrid fungi, known by its bright blood-red colour, the Horse Mushroom, and the White-manned, the Viscid White with a skin like smooth kid-leather, and the Giant Puff-ball looking like white wax. The Vegetable Beefsteak Mushroom often attains a great size on the trunks of the oaks and beech; and the favourite and well-known Champignon is also one of the Forest's favourite fungi. Here, too, flourishes the Edible Boletus, the Spindle-stem, the Meadow Mushroom, the Pasture Mushroom, the Large Grey Lepiota, the Flaky Lepiota, and some forty or more of other kinds, some poisonous, many edible.

Mr. Buxton, in his recently published work on the Forest, says: "Epping Forest is blessed with an abundance of toadstools beyond any other district within easy reach of London. The surface of the ground and the stems of partially decayed trees are studded in the autumn months with a great variety of fungi, some remarkable for the brilliancy of their colours, others noteworthy for their curious forms. In size they vary from huge gnarled specimens a foot in diameter to the minutest thread-like mildew. Some are fashioned like parasols; others are concave and resemble vases or goblets. Some are circular, some columnar, and others have no defined shape at all. The colours comprise black, pearly white, purple, orange, yellow, and the most brilliant scarlet."

FERNS.

In our various walks we have spoken of the localities where Epping ferns abound. Those most abundant are: (1) the Common Bracken (*Pteris aquilina*), which grows from one to about six and sometimes to twelve feet high in the more open and drier parts of the Forest; (2) the Common Polopody, flourishing where the soil is damp, and in the hollow tops of the pollarded trees, and in some parts reaching the height of five or six feet; (3) the Marsh Shield Fern (*Lastrea thelypteris*), rising to about three or four feet wherever the soil is most watery; (4) the Prickly-toothed Shield Fern (*Lastrea spinulosa*), also a water-lover, and (5) most of the other varieties of Shield Ferns some eight or nine in all; (6) the Hart's-tongue Fern (*Scolopendrium vulgare*), found in both dry and moist positions where shade abounds, seeming to be most luxuriant in growth where the thickets are most gloomy and the soil moist; (7) the Male Fern (*Lastrea filix-mas*), which is found almost everywhere in the thickets and the glades, in sunlight and in shade, in the ditches, on the bank-sides, and under the thick forest undergrowth, reaching a gigantic height where all the conditions of its growth are favourable and the soil has plenty of moisture; (8) the little Rue-leaved Spleenwort (*Asplenium ruta-muraria*), which grows in sun and shade; (9) the Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*), flourishing grandly where the soil is of a moist and peaty character in the low-lying portions of the Forest. In addition to these are many others, including (10) the Scaly Spleenwort (*Asplenium ceterach*); (11) the Hard Fern (*Lastrea dilatata*); (12) the Adder's-tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*); and (13) the Cut-leaved Bladder Fern, etc.

THE ROYAL FOREST HOTEL, CHINGFORD.

WHEN the Corporation of London succeeded in securing the Forest to the people's use "for ever," one of their early decisions was to reserve in a central and convenient spot the site for an hotel designed to meet the requirements of Forest frequenters and visitors. Undertaken by Messrs. GORDON, the FOREST HOTEL was the outcome of this wise provision. The foresight shown by the Corporation in this detail of their comprehensive scheme for popularising as well as preserving London's beautiful Forest, is perhaps most thoroughly appreciated by those most familiar with the district. It is difficult now to think of the Forest without this one comfortable centre and convenient "base" to start from and fall back upon. But its advantages do not end here. The position of the FOREST HOTEL renders it a health-resort of the first order. For the brisk freshness of London's "northern heights" at this point has an added and a special value from the pure bracing breezes filtered through the broad belt of Forest from the open country around and beyond.

At Chingford the jaded City or professional man finds rest and respite, and feels a grateful sense of pleasant scenery and surroundings within half an hour of the sound of Bow Bells. "The FOREST HOTEL," state Messrs. Gordon, in one of their announcements, "is intended as a resort for visitors who desire, without much trouble or great expense, to secure a quiet and agreeable change at such a convenient distance from town that no particular preparation is needed, and no long journey has to be provided for."

Standing on high ground dominating the finest half of the Forest, spreading to the uplands of Epping, the FOREST HOTEL is within gunshot distance of the high Referring Point for Greenwich Observatory, which commands far views of the Lea Valley, with Hertfordshire and half a dozen counties beyond on one side, and on the other the Thames Valley and the high hills of Kent.

A conspicuous landmark, the FOREST HOTEL, built after what is called the "rustic Elizabethan" order, with its long timber and plaster front broken up by porch, broad balconies, bay-windows, and high gables topped by overhanging eaves, and red, steep roof, is a picturesque feature in the Forest view. It faces a noble grove of ancient oaks spreading towards BUCKHURST HILL, and at the back its garden-grounds slope down Chingford Plain and overlook the HAWK and BURY WOODS beyond. By its side stands QUEEN ELIZABETH'S HUNTING LODGE, with Connaught Waters gleaming below framed by the rising woods of High Beach.

The INTERIOR of the hotel is, in some of its features, unique. On the left of the decorated hall is the coffee-room, a cool wainscoted apartment with spacious square

bay-windows, shaded by green creepers climbing the outside balcony. An oak staircase reaches a broad landing, lighted by an arcaded and tapestried alcove opening on to the balcony. The ELIZABETHAN BANQUETING HALL opens on the right—an imposing chamber lighted by draped, deep bay-windows, the upper panes filled with stained glass. The walls above the high panelled walnut wainscot are covered with soft-toned figured tapestry representing rustic sports. An arched raftered roof resting on carved beams spans the hall. In panels over its two high-tiled fireplaces are medallion portraits of the Duke of Connaught, Ranger of the Forest, and his Duchess.

The set of private dining and sitting rooms, occupying the length of this floor, is unique. First, on the right of the corridor, is the JAPANESE room, decorated with its bamboo wainscot, and walls filled with Japanese needlework, of grotesque pattern, gleaming in gold and silver thread. The ceiling is draped and festooned in soft native silk. Next is the WATTEAU room, hung with figured tapestry, and decorated with the pretty courtly figures and fancies of Watteau's landscapes. Then comes the Spanish room, bright in brilliant striped Castilian crimson. Next is the RENAISSANCE, the largest of these rooms—a square, spacious chamber, softly lighted, and hung in dead-toned tapestry, and upholstered in dull carved oak of the florid renaissance period. Next in order is the LOUIS SEIZE room, rich in ebony and crimson. The corridor ends in the MASONIC HALL, a great room lighted at both ends, looking soft and rich in its stained glass, brown panelling, dark tapestry and grey embossed ceiling. Returning along the corridor, a similar set of rooms opens from it on the other side, and overlooks the hotel gardens and the adjacent woods. First is the demurely-toned DUTCH room, relieved with stamped Spanish leather, such as was used in Holland at and after the Spanish conquest, and with old Dutch tiles of quaint device in its fireplace, and Delf ware and plaques upon the walls. Next is the ÆSTHETIC room, with its velvet dado of approved blue, and fittings in harmony down to the peacock feathers and the "blue china." The pretty, prim QUEEN ANNE room follows, with its velvet and plum-coloured wainscot and furniture, and flowered tapestry. Then comes the ELIZABETHAN, a larger room, with a deep recessed bay-window, looking an ideal dining-room in its rich bronze tones, and its carved and velvet-covered fittings.

From this floor the ascending staircase is lighted by a large stained window, depicting Queen Bess in high ruff and olive-green hunting-dress, gazing from her horse at the dead stag, and surrounded by the hounds and her courtly huntsmen.

There are in all about sixty rooms for the requirements and accommodation of visitors. On the second floor are the range of bedrooms, with private sitting and dressing rooms *en suite*. The other features of the FOREST HOTEL, including the *cuisine*, it is sufficient to say are those belonging to a first-class residential hotel. There is an extensive range of excellent STABLING, providing saddle horses and hunters, and private carriages for single and double harness.

PORTION OF THE FOREST HOTEL, CHINGFORD.

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